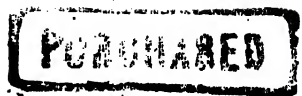


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HISTORY OF INDIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEAS

PURCHASED

HISTORY OF INDIAN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEAS

(From Rammohan to Dayananda)

BIMAN BEHARI MAJUMDAR



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PURCHASED

*To
The Sacred Memory
of
Sir Asutosh Mookherjee.*

PREFACE

The present volume completes the work undertaken in 1931 possibly shows a record in perseverance or procrastination as may diversely be intervened by friendly or hostile critics. When the University of Calcutta published History of Political Thought from Rammohan to Dayananda (1821-1883) in Bengal in 1934 I had an idea of writing two more volumes one on the development of political thought in Bombay and the other on that of Madras. In course of year I discovered that sufficient materials for filling up two companion volumes were not available. Some of the materials which could not however be interpreted without the help of persons with competent knowledge of Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil and Telugu. Meanwhile a few friends and some votaries of Philosophy both Moral and Political, advised to include the history of social ideas also, on the ground that the condition prevailing in the last century in this country made it impossible to separate these two aspects. A subject people living under a colonial form of government had have expression to their political ideas often in the garb of an essay on society functions and reforms needed. It has therefore been considered advisable accept thankfully their suggestions. The term political thought has been substituted by the term political ideas, as it appears to be more modest and at the same time comprehensive.

Out of the fourteen chapters of the book, seven namely chapters I, VIII, X to XIV incorporate the result of my fresh investigations and the rest chapters with some additions and alterations, the Volume was published in 1934.

A few Chapters deal with the history of social ideas in India as well as the Political ideas of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madras and Uttarpradesh during the Congress era. A few pages relating to the history of political associations like British Indian Association, the National Society, the Indian League and the Indian Association have been omitted from the present edition because these have been dealt with more fully in my Indian Political Associations and Reform Legislation (1881-1917).

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION (1934)

The title of this work requires some explanation. 'Political Thought' in the modern academic sense is a development possible only in a free state working out its destiny, or in a new state in process of formation out of the chaos of political strifes. In a country like ours, amongst people who have for ages been ruled over by a succession of foreigners no other political development is normally possible except acquiescence and encrusted conservation in self-defence. From such a normal condition it has been the British domination—and therein lies the peculiar merit of it—that has slowly roused India to a new political consciousness. And once again after six centuries, a development of political thought has taken place, through criticism and appreciation of the British administrative system in all its different and expanding spheres, for that is the only way in which political thought can grow in a subject country, as it grew in the subject medieval countries of Central Europe through discussion of questions affecting the Papal and Empire Governments. It is, therefore, that I have thought it necessary to trace and show the ultimate growth of abstract political ideas in India *through* a history of the activities of Indian political organizations and of the changing critical attitudes of Indian public men towards the Indo-British administration.

In this volume I have made an attempt to discover the original contribution of the Bangali thinkers to the political thought of the world. I have shown how even before Austin, Raja Rammohun made a reconciliation between the historical and analytical schools of jurisprudence and distinguished Law from Morality, how Akshaykumar Dutta preached the organismic theory of state before Herbert Spencer, and how he formulated the theory of state socialism in the fifties of the last century, and how Bankimchandra presented a new theory of Nationalism.

So far the writers of the history of the constitution of British India have presented it as a record of the measures taken by Parliament and the Government of British India to improve the political status of the people of this country. I

have attempted to throw some new light on the subject-matter by showing that the periodical improvement in the status of Indians as reflected in the Acts of 1833, 1853, 1861, for example, was owing mainly to their own agitation for political and administrative reforms, thereby inducing the Government to concede their demands from time to time. My work, therefore, illustrates the inter-relation between law and public opinion in India.

I have traced the genesis of those political aspirations and sentiments which are puzzling the Government, galvanising the nation and attracting the attention of the civilised world. The political ideas and theories of the greatest leaders of the Bengali thought in the pre-Congress era have been presented here for the first time in a compact and comprehensive form so as to enable the general readers as well as the statesmen and administrators to come to a better and quicker understanding of the trend of current politics.

I have not discussed the political ideas of Surendranath Banerjea, Bhudeva Mukherjee, Anandamohan Bose, W.C. Bonnerjee and Rameshchandra Dutta as their speeches and writings of the pre-Congress era cannot be explained without reference to those of the post-Congress era.

I take this opportunity of thanking the authorities of the following libraries for allowing me facilities to work therein: (1) Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha's Library at Patna, (2) Dr. Ramdas Sen's Library at Berhampore, (3) Uttarpara Public Library, (4) Library of British Indian Association, (5) Bangiya Sahitya Parishat Library, (6) Raja Radhakanta Deb's Library, (7) Calcutta University Library, (8) Amrita Bazar Patrika Office Library, (9) Imperial Library, (10) Patna University Library, and (11) Sj. Hemendra Prasad Ghosh's Private Library in Calcutta.

I am specially grateful to Sj. Brajendranath Banerjee, Sj. Mrinal Kanti Ghosh of the Amrita Bazar Patrika, Sj. Hemendra Prasad Ghosh, the veteran journalist of Calcutta, Dr. Kalidas Nag and Rai Bahadur Khagendranath Mitra of Calcutta University, Dr. S. C. Sircar, Mr. K. K. Dutta, and Principal K. P. Mitra of Patna University, and Mr. P. N. Banerjee, M.A., B.L., Bar-at-Law and Sj. Tridibnath Roy,

M.A., B.L., of Calcutta High Court for the valuable suggestions they have given and the help they have rendered me in course of my investigations. I am indebted to Mr. J. C. Chakravorti, Registrar, Calcutta University for the kind interest he has taken in the publication of the book within a short time. Mr. A . C. Ghatak, Superintendent, Calcutta University Press, also deserves my sincerest thanks. To Mr. K. P. Das, Head Reader of the Calcutta University Press and to professors B. K. Mullick and S. N. Sengupta of Patna I am obliged for the help they have given in the reading of proofs.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1818 the sun of glory of the Marathas set at Poona in the west and the glimmering rays of dawn of renaissance were visible at Calcutta in the east.

After the battles of Koregaon and Ashti, Peshwa Baji Rao II surrendered to the British in 1818. Almost the whole of the vast sub-continent of India lay prostrate at the feet of the conquerors. It was disarmed, divided in language and religion and devoid of any feeling of political unity. Communication was slow, tedious and uncertain. Transport of goods from one region to another presented a formidable problem. The saddest feature in the life of the people was an ignorance of the glorious achievements of the past. The Vedas and the Upanisadas were little studied. The cultivation of Vedantic philosophy was confined to a few scholastic establishments. The superb temple of Bodh Gaya lay almost buried under the ground. Asoka's soul-stirring inscriptions could not be read or deciphered. Liberal education and especially the knowledge of science were conspicuous by their absence. Women were considered unfit for scholarly pursuits. They were kept secluded in the zenana over the greater part of India. Nearly one-sixth of the total population of the country was regarded as out-castes. They were denied even the elementary rights of civic life and were condemned to endure a wretched existence—shabby, ignorant and groaning under grinding poverty. But it was in the year 1816 that the foundation of the famous Hindu College, the nursery of the first few batches of Indian patriots, was laid.

In 1917 the British Government of India had to declare progressive realisation of Responsible government by Indians

as their goal. This, however, did not satisfy the Indian Nationalists. Tilak demanded in the Calcutta Congress in 1917 that the Executive should be entirely responsible to the legislature and the latter should be wholly elected at an early date. He took care to explain that anything that exceeded the time of one generation could not be considered early. India did achieve full responsible government within thirty years of the delivery of this speech.

Another significant feature of the Congress of 1917 was the proposal made by a lady delegate for conferring the right of franchise on women. She was Sarojini Naidu, the daughter of a Bengali-speaking Brahmana Principal of Nizam's College, Hyderabad and married to a Telegu-speaking non-Brahmana of Andhra. A few days ago she had written an Introduction to the Speeches of Mahomed Ali Jinnah, whom she designated as the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity.

A representative of the voiceless millions of Untouchables of India for the first time appeared on the Congress platform and addressed the 4967 delegates assembled in Calcutta. He was Bhagai Haldar, belonging to the Namasudra community of Bengal, introduced by Surendranath Banerjee as the founder of a Dispensary and a school. He spoke, of course, in his mother tongue Bengali and repudiated the attitude of a dozen Namasudras who had been disowning India's claim to Home Rule.

These are but three of the symptoms selected at random of the birth of a new nation. But they are significant enough to give an indication of the fundamental changes that had taken place in the social and political atmosphere of India in course of one hundred years. Many factors were at work to produce this sort of unprecedented transformation. When the question of setting up a Central Legislative Council in India was being debated in the British Parliament in 1861, Ayrton opposed the very idea. His contention was that such a measure would make the people of various provinces of India conscious of the fact that they formed one nation—an idea which if realised would render the continuance of British rule in India almost impossible. In 1884 a contributor to the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha wrote that

the consummation which Ayrton dreaded was being accomplished by English education, railway system, postal service and the ever-increasing influence of the Press. To these should be added two more factors, namely, the religious reformation brought about by the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society and the Ramkrishna Mission and the researches of Oriental scholars which engendered a sense of legitimate pride in the past of our country.

Political treatises like Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, Hobbes' *Leviathan* or Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Law*, cannot be produced by a people groaning under the heels of foreign rulers. The proper climate necessary for propounding political philosophy was totally absent in India. Intellectual leaders who had the courage to speak on political affairs lent their voice mainly to the clamour of political controversy. Even if they had the time and patience to write learned theses on politics and government, few in India would have cared to read and fewer still to purchase them. They took recourse to journalism, therefore, as the vehicle of expression. A major portion of the social and political ideas of India during the hundred years selected by us is to be found in the daily, weekly, bi-weekly, fortnightly, monthly and quarterly journals owned and edited by Indians. Copies of many of these papers have disappeared from the face of the earth. Like the famous Account of Megasthenes some are preserved only in fragments quoted by contemporaries or near-contemporaries. The few that have survived the ravages of climate, fire, flood and white ants have become so brittle that they often crumble to pieces at human touch. As we had to collect our materials from such sources it was considered advisable to make profuse quotations from them. This might be considered by some as evidence of the writer's lack of power to express the ideas of others in his own words. He would plead guilty to that charge in the hope that future researchers would get here some first-hand source material not available elsewhere.

Raja Rammohan Roy is known to have been associated with the Bengali paper *Samvada Kaumudi* and the Persian paper *Mirat-ul-Akhbar*. We learn from the Calcutta Journal

of 20th April, 1822 that Rammohan Roy made the following interesting observation on the role of Indian journalism in the Prospectus of the *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* : "In short, in taking upon myself to edit this Paper, my only object is, that I may lay before the Public such articles of intelligence as may increase their experience and tend to their social improvement; and that to the extent of my abilities, I may communicate to the Rulers a knowledge of the real situation of their subjects, and make the subjects acquainted with the established laws and customs of their Rulers : that the Rulers may the more readily find an opportunity of granting relief to the people; and the people may be put in possession of the means of obtaining protection and redress from their Rulers." In the absence of representatives directly elected by the people at large the task of interpreting the grievances of the people to the Government and that of explaining the policy of the latter to the former devolved on the Press. The journalists from the days of Rammohan Roy to those of Lokmanya Tilak discharged this duty with utmost zeal and earnestness even at the risk of losing favour of the authorities and of being deported or sent to prison.

It is interesting to recall that almost all the leaders responsible for influencing public opinion in India were intimately connected with one journal or the other. Bal Shastri Jambhekar (1812-46), the celebrated Elphinstone Professor of Mathematics and the author of the first History of India in Marathi started the first Anglo-Marathi paper the *Bombay Darpan* in 1832. He was also the first leader of the reformist school of Maharashtra Society and a cautious champion of social reform. In May, 1840 he brought out a monthly Marathi magazine entitled the *Dig Darshan*. *Dnyanodaya*, the American Mission Journal paid a handsome tribute to the memory of Jambhekar in 1846 for having conducted both Journals in a liberal spirit and "in a good degree free from the influence of prevailing superstitions." The next great Marathi reformer, Sardar Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh (1823-1892), popularly known as Lok Hithawadi was connected with the *Prabhakar* as a regular contributor. This paper was started as a weekly on the 24th October, 1841 by Jambhekar's pupil Govind Vithal Kunte alias Bhau.

Mahajan. Lok Hithawadi contributed a series of one hundred and eight letters on current social and political topics between 1848 and 1850. It is regarded as a classic of Marathi prose literature and has been prescribed as a text-book by the University of Poona.

Nowrojee Furdoonjee, the teacher of Dadabhai Naoroji was a prominent shareholder of the *Bombay Times*. He took the lead in convening a meeting of the shareholders on the 23rd December, 1857 in which Dr. George Buist was censured. The latter was asked to apologise for attacking Indians as "ferocious tigers, treacherous barbarians and cruel savages" and to give the pledge of never writing in this manner. He refused to do so and was consequently dismissed.

Dadabhai Naoroji started his fruitful public career as the founder-editor of the *Rast Gofar*. He edited it from the 15th November, 1851 till August, 1852. Another leader of Bombay, Sorabji Saporji Bengali edited the paper for two years from January 1858. He was earlier associated with the *Bombay Samachar* as editor.

The great Mahadeva Govind Ranade while serving as a Professor in the Elphinstone College was offered the editorship of the English section of the *Indu Prakash*, which started its life as an Anglo-Marathi journal in 1862. He had just taken his B.A. degree at that time. He edited it for four months only. This was the paper in which Sri Aurobindo published his first attack on the Congress in a series of eleven articles contributed between 7th August, 1893 and 6th March, 1894. It was then under the editorship of his Cambridge friend K. G. Deshpande. Ranade warned the proprietors of the paper against the publication of such articles. Gokhale states that Ranade contributed 75 per cent of the articles published in the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

In 1864 Vishvanath Narayan Mandalik started an English weekly paper entitled *Native Opinion* and conducted it till 1871 with great distinction. He was the leader of the Hindus of Bombay before the origin of the Congress.

The association of Lokmanya Tilak with the *Mahratta* and the *Kesari* is too well-known to need reminding. The *Mahratta*

was published in English on the 2nd January, 1881 and the *Kesari* in Marathi on the 4th January of the same year. Gokhale conducted the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha with rare distinction from 1887 to 1895. He was, of course, guided by Ranade. Gokhale also was the joint editor of the Anglo-Marathi weekly *Sudharak or Reformer* along with Agarkar. He purchased the proprietary right of the *Dnyan Prakash* on behalf of the Servants of India Society in 1905 and made it a highly effective instrument for imparting political education.

Some eminent public men of Maharashtra who rose to become High Court judges also took to journalism earlier in their life. K. T. Telang contributed many articles to the *Indu Prakash* and the *Native Opinion*. N. G. Chandavarkar became the editor of the *Indu Prakash* even before taking his degree in Law. He continued to be in charge of the paper from 1878 to 1889 though he joined the Bar in 1881.

In Madras, prominent public men like Sir T. Madhava Rao, Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunath Rao took the lead in starting the *Native Public Opinion* which, however, failed to achieve much success. The first popular and at the same time efficient journal conducted by Indians in Madras was the *Hindu*. It started its fruitful career on the 20th September, 1878. Under the able guidance of a succession of brilliant editors it has grown into a powerful institution, inspiring generations of Indians in undertaking social and political reforms. But unfortunately no copy of any issue of the paper during the first five years of its existence is available in India. G. Subramania Iyer, its first editor was a staunch Congressman and a practical social reformer. He started the Tamil weekly *Swadesamitram* in 1882 and conducted it with remarkable success. It became a daily paper in 1899. Another great journalist of Madras was G. Parameswaran Pillai (1864-1903), a leading Congressman and the author of two remarkable books, *Indian National Leaders* and *Indian Congressmen*. In 1892 at the early age of twenty-eight he became the editor of the *Madras Standard*, founded in 1877. He boldly championed the Nationalist views in it. Having been deeply interested in social reform he founded the

Madras Social Reform Association and became the President of the Indian Temperance Association. The most remarkable journal for advocating social reform consistently was the *Indian Social Reformer* which was started in Madras in 1890 but its office was soon shifted to Bombay. It was most ably conducted for half-a-century by K. Natarajan, who was associated with the *Times of India* till 1919. G. A. Natesan, the famous editor of the *Indian Review* deserves to be remembered with gratitude by every student of national movement in India.

In the United Provinces we find Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya serving as the editor of the *Hindusthan*. Even a busy lawyer like Tej Bahadur Sapru became the editor of the *Kashmir Darpan* in 1903. Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha started his journalistic career at Allahabad but later on shifted his field of activity to Patna. His *Hindusthan Review* is a storehouse of information regarding Indian social and political ideas. In the Punjab the *Tribune* founded by Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia became a power under an array of able editors. In the official Report of the Congress for the year 1887 we find Bipin Chandra Pal describing himself as a journalist working for the *Tribune*.

In Bengal eminent personages like Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore and his gifted sons and daughters were actively associated with monthly journals. The most important social and political ideas of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore are to be found in the Bengali monthly journals. Surendranath Banerjee was equally powerful as an orator and an editor. Sisir Kumar Ghosh of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* did not take much active part in politics after the failure of the Indian League. His younger brother, Motilal Ghosh, however, exercised a good deal of influence on both the sections of the Congress. In an article entitled "Journalism in India" contributed to the Madras monthly journal *The Hindu Reformer and Politician*, March and April, 1883 (p. 639) we find the following: "The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* has the largest circulation but it is credited by Europeans with being a too severe critic. But one would challenge anybody to show any fault in its logic or any error or mistake in its statement of

facts. If its criticisms are severe in cases of wanton mischief, oppression and cruelty, its admiration for sincerity and honesty in Englishman is as unbounded. The utmost that can be said against it is that it is as severe in its condemnation of vice as it is profuse in its approbation of virtue." No other journal received such high praise in the pre-Congress era.

The most constructive ideas in political science in the period selected by us are to be found in the articles contributed by Sir Aurobindo in the *Bande Mataram*, *Karmayogin* and the *Arya*.

The year 1917 marks the end of one epoch and the beginning of another in the history of Indian Nationalism. Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale died in 1915 and Dadabhai Naoroji in 1917. The Liberal school of politicians who had been dominating the political scene ever since the inception of the Congress lost their majority in the organization. This was the last Congress they attended. Initiative passed on to the Nationalists. But Mahatma Gandhi had not as yet come to the forefront. In the Lucknow Congress in 1916 he could not find sufficient support to get elected to the Subjects Committee. The President had to nominate him. In 1917 he delivered a speech, as in 1901 and 1915 on the condition of Indians in the Colonies. But as he decided to speak in Hindi in 1917 his speech was not reported at all. He, however, began the Satyagraha movement in the district of Champaran in that year and thereby evolved a novel technique and ushered in a new era in Indian political movement.

On September 29, 1860 a Madras Journal entitled *Indian Statesman* wrote under the caption 'India in Transition': "Isolated in villages, isolated in castes, separated by the fierce antagonism of religions of Vishnu and Shiva, of Buddhist and Brahmanas, of Quoran and Shastras—the growth of a national sentiment has been next to impossible. The language, the tradition and the instincts of the different races as different as those of Saxons and Celts and the fusion, if ever it is accomplished, must be the growth of generations, even under the fostering hand of a dominant race. A democratic spirit is abroad—wholly foreign to the Hindu character; and though the cloud is at present no bigger than a man's hand, yet the

day will come when the spirit must be either disciplined by a healthy political training, or when it will break through all restraints and become as injurious to the prosperity of the country as the ravages of an army of Mutineers "

The conclusion of this article is remarkable for the prophetic vision which the writer revealed. He could foresee the advent of a universal leader like Mahatma Gandhi. He writes: "What India may have to experience some day is the union of democratic restlessness with some new religion, the advent of another Buddha who shall give expression to the undefined yearnings of multitudes, preach down the tyranny of caste, heal the antagonism of ages and fuse the people into a Nation." When Mahatma Gandhi made the removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity the central planks of his political platform in 1919, very few amongst the highly educated Indians could realise that he was playing the historic role in the fulfilment of age-long aspirations of Indian nationalism.

CHAPTER I

THE STATE AND SOCIETY—THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL REFORM

Baji Rao II, the last Peshwa is known to have often dissuaded widows from becoming *Satis* and paid for their support thereafter. On the 10th of August, 1818, only sixty-seven days after his surrender to the British power, Lieutenant Henry Pottinger, Collector of Ahmadnagar requested Elphinstone to allow him to do likewise.¹ The latter consented² and the Supreme Government, too, concurred probably with a view to conciliating the people who had so recently been conquered. The amount of money given as pension to the widow was just barely sufficient for her maintenance. Briggs, the Collector of Khandesh gave seven rupees a month to the widow of one of his Karkuns.³ But this policy was soon afterwards given up, because it was apprehended that many widows would pretend to show determination to become *Satis* for the sake of earning the pension. Such an apprehension had never been entertained by the Mahratta Government, who knew how to distinguish between the genuine resolution and a mere pretence.

In the very same month of August 1818, Rammohan Roy (1774-1833) took the lead in drawing up a petition to the Government of Bengal to counteract the Memorial submitted by certain orthodox Hindus against the Regulations made by Lord Hastings in 1813, 1815, and 1817 to check the practice of *Sati*. The Regulations required that the Magistrate or one of his subordinates should attend every case of *Sati* and satisfy himself that no force was used, that the widow was not drugged or below the age of puberty, or pregnant, and that if she had any infant children, some relative would guarantee to provide a suitable maintenance for them.

Rammohan Roy drew a vivid picture of the way in which force was in fact applied—"Your petitioners are fully aware from their own knowledge, and from the authority of credible eye-witnesses, that cases have frequently occurred where women have been induced by the persuasions of their next heirs, interested in their determination to burn themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands; that others, who were induced by fear to retract a resolution rashly expressed in the first moments of grief, of burning with their deceased husbands, have been forced upon the pile and there bound down with ropes and pressed with green bamboos until consumed with the flames; that some, after flying from the flame, have been carried back by their relations and burnt to death. All these instances, your petitioners humbly submit, are murders according to every *Shastra*, as well as to the common sense of all nations."⁴

Thus did Rammohan Roy show that it was not a mere case of allowing the Hindus to continue a particular socio-religious custom. Every Government, to be worthy of its name, must make every effort to protect the life of every one of its subjects. In November, 1818 Rammohan Roy published the first anti-*Sati* tract entitled 'The Conference between an Advocate for and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows alive'. Next year it was followed by the second tract on the same subject. Both these tracts were written in Bengali, because his object was not so much to appeal to the Government as to educate the opinion of the people of Bengal. But for his strong advocacy against the *Sati*, the Government would not have taken the courage to abolish the inhuman practice. The Christian missionaries had been submitting petitions to the Government for abolishing *Sati* since 1772 without any tangible effect.

The credit of inducing the British India Government to undertake the first social legislation goes to William Carey, the famous missionary of Serampore. He drew the attention of the Government to the inhuman practice, occasionally followed, of throwing little children in the confluence of the Ganges and the Bay of Bengal. The misguided parents hoped that the children, born subsequently to them, would enjoy longevity. Here the crime was more heinous than the *sati*,

because the little ones were more helpless than the unfortunate widows. Lord Wellesley prohibited the barbarous practice in August 1802. But neither he nor his two immediate successors had the courage to stop the *Sati* completely. Meanwhile Rammohan was carrying on vigorous propaganda against it through the columns of his own journal '*Samvada Kaumudi*'. Lord William Bentinck found that the ground had been adequately prepared and he was sure of the support of Court of Directors. He, however, consulted a number of people including Wilson, the celebrated Oriental Scholar and Rammohan Roy. Wilson opined that the total abolition of *Sati* might lead to the discontent of the people. Rammohan was in favour of abolishing the practice "quietly and unobservedly" and not stopping it altogether immediately. He advocated increasing checks on the practice through the indirect agency of the Police.

Rammohan Roy's cautious policy has been mistaken by some scholars as the denial of the right of a foreign Government to interfere in the social reform of the Hindus. Dr. R. C. Majumdar compares his attitude with that of Tilak with regard to the Age of Consent Bill and observes "People who blamed him (Tilak) hardly realised that Tilak merely continued the traditions of Rammohan Roy, the pioneer of Social reforms, followed by many Hindu leaders throughout the century."⁵ But the comparison is entirely misleading because Tilak carried on a vigorous propaganda against the Age of Consent Bill even after its enactment, whereas Rammohan Roy submitted to the House of Lords a petition in favour of the Regulation in July, 1831 and published in 1832 a small tract entitled "Some Remarks in vindication of the Resolution passed by the Government of Bengal in 1829 abolishing the practice of Female Sacrifice in India."⁶ All these steps were taken by him to counteract the propaganda carried on by the Dharma Sabha against the Regulation.

The preamble of the Regulation XVII of 1829 abolishing the *Sati* states: "The practice of Suttee is revolting to human nature; it is nowhere enjoined by the religion of the Hindus as an imperative duty; on the contrary a life of purity and retirement on the part of widows more specially and preferably inculcated; actuated by these considerations the Governor-

General in Council without intending to depart from one of the first and most important principles of the British Government in India, that all classes of the people be secured in the observance of their religious usages, as long as that system can be adhered to without violation of the paramount dictates of justice and humanity, has deemed its right to establish the following rules." This indicates the general trend of the policy of Government in the nineteenth century. In reply to the objections raised by the Dharma Sabha organised on the 17th January, 1830, that is, six weeks after the passing of the Regulation, Bentinck pointed out that the Government was merely following, and not leading, public opinion, which had long been moving in the direction of abolition. He rejected their petition and advised them to move the Privy Council, if they so liked. 800 Hindus at the instance of the Dharma Sabha made an appeal to the King-in-Council. Against this petition Rammohan drafted another and presented it to the House of Commons. The Privy Council rejected the appeal against *Sati* on the 11th July, 1832. The *Sati* was abolished in Madras in February, 1830 and in Bombay in April, 1830. It continued, however, in many parts of the Indian States for a few years more. It was abolished in Baroda, Indore and Satara between 1839 and 1841 and in Rajputana in 1846.

The history of the abolition of the *Sati* shows that the threat of grave consequences was hollow and groundless. The Hindu society quietly accepted the law laid down by the Government. If there was some demand for the abolition of the *Sati* from the Hindu society, there was none at all for the abolition of slavery in India. Two factors seem to have been responsible for this utter silence. First, slavery prevailed in America and in many parts of Europe. Secondly, slaves in India were treated much more kindly than anywhere else in the world. A slave could perform the last rites of a Hindu who had no heir. In the Muslim community a slave could even marry the daughter of his master. When slavery was declared to have been abolished in the whole of the British Empire in 1835, hardly any reaction was noticeable in India. The Report on Slavery in India, published in 1841 revealed that in the Tamil land greater part of labouring classes engaged in agriculture were in a state of acknowledged bondage. Bengal

and the southern part of Bombay Presidency had also a considerable number of slaves. The initiative in making law against slavery was taken up by the Government, which declared by an Ordinance in 1843 that the Civil Courts could not take any cognizance of claims to slaves. It permitted slaves to claim their freedom but it did not make immediate emancipation compulsory. The Penal Code of 1860 finally prohibited all trade in and possession of slaves. There was no organised resistance nor even a protest against the abolition of slavery, though no compensation was given to those who had owned slaves. This is an eloquent testimony to the moral sense evoked by legislation in India. But at the same time it cannot be gainsaid that some kinds of slavery continued to prevail in out of the way places in rural areas. Slavery and forced labour had to be abolished in parts of Assam, Orissa and Chotanagpur by the Convention of Forced Labour of the League of Nations on May 1, 1932.

Indian Society was stirred to its depths by the attempts of Christian missionaries to make converts among high class Hindus and Mahomedans. Anti-slavery measures severely affected the economic interests of the upper classes, yet they did not stir up any agitation against it. Nothing was dearer to the heart of the people of India than their religion. When they found it endangered either by the activity of the Christian missionaries or by the legislative policy of the Government they took recourse to all the methods of demonstration of their grave sense of discontent.

One of these methods was to carry on, what is now called, a signature campaign, which enlightened those who were asked to put their signature to a petition and at the same time demonstrate before the authorities the strength of public opinion against a particular line of policy. Such a procedure was unknown to Indians. The British citizens residing in India must have taught this method of ventilating public grievance and of carrying on political agitation. In 1838, we find that 1400 British residents living in the 32 districts of Bengal were able to induce 200 Indian merchants to append their signature along with the former to a petition against Act No. XI of 1836, which made all the British-born subjects of the Crown amenable to the jurisdiction of the

Provincial Courts, some of which were presided over by Indian Judges. The number of such Judges in Bengal and Agra was not less than 96 at that time. Mr. Ward said in course of his speech in the House of Commons that Mr. Macaulay had by this enactment stripped off the British-born subjects of all the privileges which they had previously enjoyed. Mr. Grant, the then President of the Board of Trade replied emphatically that Indians and Englishmen should be subject to the same tribunals and to the same laws.⁷ The British petitioners did not, therefore, succeed in their object, but their effort to associate 200 Indians with them in the signature campaign, taught the Indian community how to use this weapon in the early stage of their struggle for freedom.

In 1840 we find as many as 2113 individuals, Hindus, Parsis and Mahomedans of Bombay addressing a petition to the Government of Bombay, in course of which it was pointed out that "a direct and most unwarrantable attack has been made upon their religion by the missionaries, countenanced by high authority." The petitioners wrote that they had responded to the cry of 'Educate the people' expecting "to be elevated by education to a level, in respect of political privileges and rewards with their European brethren."⁸

One of the objects of starting an English newspaper, entitled 'The Crescent' on the 2nd October, 1844 in Madras by Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty (1806-68) was to combat the missionary activity. This pioneer in the public life of Madras organised a big meeting on the 9th April, 1845, in which a memorial was drawn up and signed a proposed law in favour of Christian converts. It was sent to the Supreme Government in England. The memorialists were informed that the provisions of the proposed enactment which had necessitated the memorial would be expunged.⁹ Another meeting was held at the Pachaiyappa's institution under his presidentship on the 7th October, 1846. A memorial complaining against missionary activities was approved in this meeting and despite the Sheriff's attempt to dissuade the people from signing it as many as 12000 persons put their signature on it.¹⁰ In the Madras Records Office we find him signing another petition as "Lutchoomanarasoo Chetty." In it the Hindu community seeks redress for certain acts of the

local Government by which they feel aggrieved, and their civil and religious interests infringed.¹¹ Another memorial was sent to the Court of Directors from Madras praying for a clear expression of the sentiments of the Hon'ble Court regarding the protection of the religions of India and complaining specially against Missionary J. Anderson towards their female children.¹²

The Hindus of Bengal joined hands with those Madras in making a great protest against the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850. The Act provided that the change of religion and loss of caste should not involve the penalty of forfeiture of right of property and inheritance. It was intended specially to protect the converts from Hinduism to Christianity. The Hindus of Madras and Bengal thought that it would give an incentive to young men to give up the religion of their forefathers. They, therefore, sent an enormous petition bearing the signature of some 60,000 people to the Government.¹³

Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98) in his notable book, "The Causes of Indian Revolt" wrote that Indians "believed that Government intended to force the Christian religion and foreign customs upon Hindu and Mussalman alike".¹⁴ On the 15th July, 1859 the Madras Native Association sent a memorial to the Secretary of State for India through the Government of Madras, complaining against missionaries and also against Lord Harris and various Government servants for helping and supporting the activities of preachers of Christianity. The petitioners prayed that Government officials be restrained from taking part in the Missionary proceedings, and that the policy of religious neutrality should be undeviatingly observed and adhered to.¹⁵

Sir Henry Maine introduced the Converts' Re-marriage Bill on the 4th November, 1864, when the Maharaja of Vizianagram and Raja Sahib Dayal were the only two Indians present in the Supreme Legislature. There were some petitions against it. The Maharaja said that there was necessity for such a law and argued that the term '*Patita*' in Parasara could not have meant a Christian. According to him a '*patita*' (fallen from the path of Dharma) was one who being still a Hindu in name, did not observe the rules of the Hindu religion. In moving from the Chair that the Report of the

Select Committee on the Bill be taken into consideration, Sir Henry Maine said that the Bill had been framed upon and moulded according to the opinions and suggestions of the Maharajas of Vizianagram and of Burdwan. Referring to the agitation against the Bill he observed that it was not very fervent nor formidable and that it was initiated by some "native gentlemen of Agra Sudder Court." He held that it was simply impossible not to legislate on the re-marriage of Indian converts who had been repudiated by their "heathen wives."¹⁶ The Act enabled the Christian converts to obtain divorce from their spouse and marry again. The Hindu wife who remained steadfast to her religion lost her maintenance. This defect was partially remedied by the Native Converts' Marriage Dissolution Act of 1886 as it empowered the Court to direct the husband to give maintenance to his wife during the remainder of her life, or so long as she did not re-marry.

The conversion of Hindus to Christianity continued to be regarded as an anti-national activity even in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Pandita Rama Bai (1858-1922) a lady of extra-ordinary powers and learning had become a Christian in 1883 and having secured substantial financial assistance from the U.S.A., opened an institute for child widows, called Sharada Sadan at Poona in March, 1889. In December of the same year the *Christian Weekly* reported that out of 7 child widows of the Sadan, two were inclined to embrace Christianity. This made not only Tilak hostile to the Sadan but also led reformers like Ranade to withdraw their support from it.¹⁷

Having learnt the use of sending numerous signed petitions to the Government in matters connected with religion the early Indian leaders began to utilise the method in political matters. The petition which was sent by the British Indian Association on the eve of renewal of the Charter in 1853 contained 5900 signatures.¹⁸ The Memorial sent by the Bombay Association in 1852 bore the signature of 2400 citizens.¹⁹ The petition sent by Chetty from Madras in 1855 was signed by 14000 persons and it prayed that the administration of the British territories in India be transferred from the East India Company to the Crown.^{20(a)}

In 1840 Dadoba Pandurang founded a Society in Bombay called the Paramhans Mandal with the object of abolishing the caste system, introducing widow re-marriage and renunciation of idol worship. The objects of the Society were to be kept secret till it had been able to recruit one thousand members. It could not produce any direct effect on society.^{20(b)}

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, a Pandit of the old school with surprisingly modern ideas, was in favour of invoking the power of the Government in reforming the condition of the Hindu Society. The petition he drafted for enabling Hindu widows to re-marry was signed by 987 persons. Those who hold that Vidyasagar's signature campaign was the first manifestation of mass movement in the social field are evidently wrong,²¹ because more numerous petitions had been submitted before the 4th of October, 1855, the date of the petition for making an enabling Act for widow re-marriage. But it must be admitted that Vidyasagar had mastered the technique of moving the Government. He must have inspired men like Kishori Chand Mitra, Rama Prasad Roy and the Maharaja of Burdwan to take the lead in petitioning the Government against polygamy prevalent largely amongst the *Kulin* Brahmanas of Bengal. In 1863 as many as 21000 Hindus of Bengal signed a petition against this evil custom.²²

Vidyasagar achieved success in getting the necessary law passed for making the re-marriage of widows valid but failed to make polygamy illegal. There were several reasons for the success of his former measure and failure in case of the latter. The problem of widow re-marriage was acute amongst the high caste Hindus all over India, but polygamy was prevalent on a large scale only amongst a small section of the Brahmanas of Bengal. The re-marriage of widows was only an enabling Act not making it compulsory in any case; while the prohibition of polygamy was to be enforced by the power of the Government. Then again the outbreak of the Revolt of 1857 in the wake of the passing of the widow Re-marriage Act of 1856 made the Government extremely cautious in interfering in social matters.

The agitation for the re-marriage of child widows had been going on for a pretty long time. The First book on the subject

was written in Marathi in 1837 under the joint authorship of a Telugu Brahmana and a resident of Ratnagiri. In 1839 the "Friend of India" wrote that the Bombay Government enquired "of those learned in Hindu laws, whether there was any peremptory prohibition of the marriage of widows to be found in the Shastras". In Bengal the voice against "the necessity of an infant widow passing her life in a state of celibacy" was raised in the Atmiya Sabha of Rammohan Roy as early as the 9th May, 1819.²³ The *Bengal Spectator* published several letters on the subject and an editorial article exhorted upon the educated people to take the lead in marrying widows.²⁴ But it did not suggest any legislation. A correspondent in the 'Samachar Darpan' on the 14th March 1835 suggested that the Government should pass a law, enabling the widows of high castes to contract a second marriage. Vidyasagar wrote his first paper on the subject in 1854 and got it published in the Tattva-bodhini Patrika.²⁵ His book on widow re-marriage was published in January, 1855 and the application for making law was submitted in October of the same year. The law was passed on the 16th July, 1856. It declares that no marriage of a woman whose husband was dead at the time of her second marriage is invalid and no issue of such marriage shall be illegitimate. But at the same time it is provided that the marriage of a Hindu widow is to be considered as her death with respect to any right or interest in her deceased husband's property by way of maintenance or inheritance or by virtue of any will conferring on her death with respect to any right or interest in her deceased husband's property by way of maintenance or inheritance or by virtue of any will conferring on her a limited interest. In one respect the Act is rather lenient on the widow. She does not forfeit the right of guardianship of her minor children by reason of her re-marriage.

Though the re-marriage of widows is widely prevalent in the lower strata of Hindu society, yet the example of the so-called upper castes has deterred many of the former from contracting any marriage subsequent to the death of the first husband. After the passing of the enabling Act social reformers in different part of India tried their level best to induce the Hindu society to avail of it. In Bombay the Widow Marriage

Association was established in 1866. The Secretary of the Association was Vishnu Shastri Pandit, who became the Editor of the *Indu Prakash* and published a translation of Vidyasagar's book on widow re-marriage in Marathi.²⁶

A Re-marriage Association was started at Ahmadabad in 1884. In Madras there was another organisation, known as the "Hindu Womens' Re-marriage Association." It drafted a Hindu Marriage Bill on the 16th of June, 1883 which aimed at treating child marriage invalid and providing some kind of registration of marriage and as such the recognition of the nuptial by the authorities of the State. The Bill stated that "No marriage contracted between Hindus shall be valid and complete until cohabitation takes place. The contracting parties, who may complete their marriage by consummation, shall within 15 days from the date of nuptials, sign their names either personally or by a duly authorised agent in a book to be kept for the purpose in the office of a Sub-Registrar of Assurances."²⁷ No member of the Legislature, however, could be induced to introduce such a crude type of bill. G. Subramania Iyer, the founder-editor of the '*Hindu*' was a warm advocate of the cause of re-marriage of child widows. His daughter became a widow at the age of 11 or 12 and he tried to practise what he had been preaching. The re-marriage of his daughter to a Brahmana bridegroom at Bombay on the occasion of the Congress session in 1889 caused strangement with his friend and colleague, M. Veerraghava Chariar.²⁸ In 1893 D. K. Karve having become a widower married a widow, revived the Widow Marriage Association and opened a Hindu Widows' Home in Poona city.

In spite of all these efforts there was very little progress in social reform so far as widow re-marriage was concerned. From 1856 to the end of the century there were 117 cases of widow re-marriage in Bengal, and of these 46 were celebrated during the life time of Vidyasagar and 41 amongst the members of the Brahmo community. In the Bombay Presidency the number of such marriage was a little more than 100 in spite of the strenuous efforts of Ranade and his associates. In May, 1900 the first Bombay Provincial Social Conference was held at Satara and Ranade as its first President gave a statistical report of the progress of the cause of widow re-

marriage in course of which he observed that in the nineteenth century "the Punjab and the N. W. Provinces show a total of more than thirty, and Madras presents nearly the same figure. The total of marriages would, therefore, be about 300 throughout India in the several provinces in the higher castes."²⁹ Pandita Ramabai, who herself became a widow at a comparatively young age, was absolutely right when she said that despite all the attempts of reformers "widow marriage among the high caste people will not for a long time become an approved custom."³⁰ This remains true despite the passing of the Bombay Hindu Heir's Relief Act in 1886 declaring that a person who has married a widow shall not be liable for the debt of her deceased husband.

In 1855, the year in which Vidyasagar, sent his petition for legislation on widow re-marriage, the Maharaja of Burdwan presented a memorial to the Legislative Council setting forth the serious evils arising from the practice of polygamy.³¹ In the same year the Bandhu Varga Samavaya Sabha at the instance of Kishori Chand Mitra (1822-1873) sent up a numerously signed petition praying for a legislative enactment against polygamy. In 1857 under the leadership of Rama Prasad Roy, son of Rammohan Roy, some gentlemen of Bengal sent another petition to the Legislative Council making the same prayer.³² Sri J. P. Grant promised to introduce a Bill on the subject but the out-break of the Revolt stopped all further action. After the inauguration of the reformed Supreme Council in 1862, Raja Deo Narain Singh Bahadur, the Maharaja of Benares, one of three of the first batch of Indian Legislators, proposed to introduce a Bill to check polygamy, but he could not secure the necessary permission of the Government before the expiry of his term of office, which was only two years at the time. In 1863 several petitions were presented to the Government of Bengal on the same subject by nearly 21000 Hindus. At the same time several Indian newspapers published trenchant censure of the civil custom. All these induced the Bengal Government to seek on the 5th April, 1866 the permission of the Governor-General for introducing into the Bengal Council a Bill for the prevention of polygamy among the Hindus in Bengal. The Lt. Governor of Bengal added that it was his intention to take as the basis of his measure a draft Bill which had been

prepared about three years ago by Raja Deo Narain Singh.³³ The Governor-General-in-Council did not doubt that the great bulk of the intelligent and thoughtful portion of the Hindu community in Bengal would be found in favour of the measure, but he was obliged to say that there was nothing to show that the people in general, even in Bengal, were prepared either for the complete suppression or strict limitation of polygamy. The Governor-General, therefore, advised Sir Cecil Beadon, the Lt. Governor of Bengal to consult some of the ablest of the leading Indians in Bengal, and with their assistance carefully mature the plan. Beadon appointed such a Committee but it could not recommend the passing of a declaratory Act. Vidyasagar, as a member of the Committee contended that the evils of polygamy were not greatly exaggerated and that the decrease of these evils was not sufficient to do away with the necessity of legislation. But this plea for legislation was of no avail. Some of the Bengali members of the Committee held that the *Kulin* Brahmanas would settle into a monogamous habit by the force of education and social opinion. Beadon, however, could not share their views, though he received with satisfaction their testimony that the custom of taking a plurality of wives as a means of subsistence had come to be marked with strong social disapprobation. In the short autobiography of Rashbehari Mukhopadhyay of Vikrampur-Tarpasha in the district of Dacca, published in 1881 we find that he was left an orphan in his infancy and that his paternal uncle married him with 8 wives in his boyhood. Rashbehari was averse to polygamy and whenever further proposal of marriage came, he took to his heels. Seeing this reluctance, the uncle separated him from the joint family by saddling him with a debt of three hundred rupees. Rashbehari says that as he had no means of repaying the heavy debt, he had to marry 6 more wives to earn the dowry necessary for freeing him from debt.³⁴ The *Kulin* Brahmana, of course, had no responsibility for maintaining his wives. The poor ladies lived in their parental home.

It is noteworthy that the widow re-marriage has failed to become popular in spite of legislative sanction, while polygamy and Kulinism practically vanished long before the enactment of penal legislation against the taking of plurality of wives

in the Indian Republic. This shows that social forces are stronger than legislative decrees. There are, however, some psychological and economic factors which operate against the re-marriage of widows. Majority of widows are unwilling to take a second husband, partly due to the belief that marriage is ordained by heaven, and partly because of their fear of incurring social opprobrium. The dowry system prevails in spite of anti-dowry laws passed by the Central and State legislatures; and it is difficult to pay for the expenses of marriage of maidens for the majority of their guardians. They are, therefore, reluctant or unable to spend money for the re-marriage of widows. The 11th Social Conference held at Amraoti in 1897 considered the forfeiture of her life-interest in her husband's immovable property on her re-marriage as a deterrant factor. But with the diffusion of higher education women are becoming self-reliant and widow re-marriage may become more prevalent than what it is now. Thanks to the propaganda made by the Arya Samaj in the Punjab which was its principal stronghold, the annual number of widow marriage increased from 1176 to 1805 between 1915 and 1928.^{35(a)}

A decision of the Supreme Court of Bombay on the 22nd April, 1862 was indirectly instrumental in stopping the grossly immoral practices of some of the Goswamis of the Vallabhachari sect. Karsandas Mulji (1832-71), the pioneer of social reform in Gujarat published on the 21st October, 1860 in the *Satya Prakash*, a Journal which he edited, an article in course of which he showed that the Goswamis inculcated the teaching that a disciple after having married should, before enjoying the company of his wife, make an offering of her to the Guru. He further said that 'Not only one's wife, but one's daughter also is to be made over.' He specially charged Jadunathji Maharaj with countenancing such practices and the latter brought a libel suit against Karsandas Mulji and claimed damages of Rs. 50,000/-. The case created great sensation. Mulji produced 17 witnesses including Dr. Bhau Dajee, Vishwanath Narain Mandlik and Dr. John Wilson to show that what he had written was true in all respects. The Judges held that the article was not libellous and in their verdict said, "The principle for which the defendant and his witnesses have been contending is

simply this that what is morally wrong cannot be theologically right, that when practices which sap the very foundation of morality, which involve a violation of the eternal and immutable laws of Right, are established in the name and under the sanction of Religion, they ought, for the common welfare of Society, and in the interest of Humanity itself, to be publicly denounced and exposed.^{35(b)}

There was practically no demand from the public for stopping the murder of female infants, which prevailed rather widely amongst the Rajputs, Jats and certain other communities in the North West Provinces (U.P.), the Punjab and Oudh. But the British Indian Government considered it their bounden duty to stop this heinous custom. In introducing the Female Infanticide Bill on the 14th January, 1870 Sir John Strachey said that Jonathan Duncan tried to stop it in the Benares Division without any success. Regulations prohibiting it had been passed in 1795 and 1804 but little effect did it produce. In 1839 Mansingh, Maharaja of Marwar issued a decree prohibiting Rajputs from killing their daughters.³⁶ The order was inscribed on a marble slab in 1843. The expense of marriage of girls was very high among the Rajputs and that is why many of them preferred to kill their daughters as soon as they were born. At the session of the Supreme Legislature on the 4th of February, 1870, when Strachey moved for the consideration of the Bill, no Indian member was present. He said that the Bill would enable the Government to lay down rules for regulating and limiting marriage expenses amongst the classes among whom the practice prevailed. The Maharaja of Jaipur, who was at that time a member of the Legislature, but who could not be present on that day sent a letter in which he agreed with the aims of the Government to prevent infanticide. He referred to the regulation of marriage expenses in the Jaipur State a hundred years ago by Maharaja Savai Jay Singh. He appealed to all the Rajputs to co-operate with the Government in suppressing the crime. The Governor-General and Sir Henry Durand highly praised the Maharaja of Jaipur for the manifestation of this sort of helpful spirit.³⁷ The Bill was merely passed; but it is extremely doubtful whether it was able to stop the inhuman practice. An enquiry into 62 out of

308 villages in the Varanasi District revealed that there was not a single girl below six years of age. The Census Report of 1911 revealed that in a certain village no marriage of a daughter had taken place for more than 200 years.³⁸ The Social Reform Conference which met regularly every year since 1887 had not a word to say against female infanticide, apparently because the reformers thought that the practice had been stopped by the Act of 1870.

In 1865 the Government enacted special laws regarding marriage and inheritance for the Parsee community in response to the demand voiced in "Rast Goftar" and the Parsee Law Association. Some of the young enthusiasts of the Brahmo Samaj found it impossible to conform to the marriage rites of the Hindu Society in 1865-66. They could not take the bride as a mere gift from her father in the presence of *Shalagrama Shila* and the sacrificial fire. They introduced new forms of rituals such as taking the consent of both the bride and the bridegroom and subscribing to a new form of marriage vow. Doubts arose as to the validity of marriages contracted in such fashion. The Pandits of Calcutta, Nadia and Varanasi declared such marriages null and void. T.H. Cowie, the then Advocate General of Bengal, gave his opinion in reply to query that the Brahmo marriages did not conform to the procedure prescribed by any law or to the usage of any recognised religion and as such were invalid. Ananda Mohan Basu, who later on became the President of the Congress, advised that a request should be made to the Government to pass a special marriage law for them.³⁹

The Bill had to be re-named as many as three times. In 1868 it was introduced in the form of a Civil Marriage Bill, applicable to all non-Christians, who had any objection to be married according to the form of the established Indian religions and they had to make a declaration as follows:—

"I do not profess the Christian religion, and I object to be married in accordance with the rites of the Hindu, Muhammadan, Buddhist, Parsi or Jewish religion." But the orthodox Hindus raised a vehement protest against the Bill. They apprehended that if the Bill were passed it might induce many professed Hindus to contract marriages in disregard of

caste rules. They feared that such a measure would bring about a speedy disintegration of the Hindu Society. The Government recognised the validity of this objection and got the Bill drafted again as the Brahmo Marriage Bill, applicable only to the Brahmos. The Adi Brahmo Samaj, of which Debendranath Tagore, father of poet Tagore, was the leader, objected to it, because it would minimise the chance of the marriage of Brahmos being ever recognised as Hindu marriage. The Bill had to be given up again.

In its final form the Bill became known as the Special Marriage Bill and was introduced on the 27th March, 1871.⁴⁰ On being asked by the Government as to whether he had any objection to the changing of the name of the Bill, Keshab Chandra replied, "It is not the designation we care for, we want the substance; we wish that early marriage, polygamy and bigamy should be suppressed among us, and also idolatory and caste. If a comprehensive marriage law be given to all India, we shall have no reasons to complain."

On the 30th September, 1871, Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-84) delivered a memorable address on National Marriage Reform in the Town Hall of Calcutta. In course of this speech he claimed, "The Brahmo Marriage Bill contemplates a more radical and more comprehensive reformation than it is possible for the present generation of educated natives to imagine or conceive. It seems to overthrow caste and not mere idolatory. It contemplates inter-marriage between the Sikhs and the Bengalees, the inhabitants of Bombay and Madras, between the Tamil and Telegu races in Southern India and the people of North Western Provinces. The Bill contemplates a union and fusion of the many discordant and social elements which lie scattered in the amplitude of the Indian continent." This high-sounding claim, however, could hardly be substantiated, because the provisions of the Bill were applicable only to those who were prepared to declare that they did not belong to the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Sikh or Jaina community. Very few persons could be found in the nineteenth century to make such a declaration. The Bill purported to institute a sort of Civil marriage, contracted between members of different castes. Polygamy cannot be resorted to by those who contract marriage under this Act.

It allows divorce on the ground of persistent cruelty or adultery.

For another reason the Act may be regarded as a landmark in the history of social legislation in India. On the 1st of April, 1871 Keshab Chandra Sen issued a circular letter to some leading medical practitioners, English, Hindu and Mussalman, requesting them to give their opinion on the conditions and development of puberty as observed in Indian girls, and on the earliest marriageable age consistent with the well-being of mother and child and society. Dr. Mahendra Lal Sarkar showed in his elaborate reply that amongst 138 cases of Calcutta girls he had examined, he found that on an average the menstrual function began after the age of 11 years and 9 months. "But it is a grave mistake to suppose", he wrote, "that the female, who has just begun to menstruate, is capable of giving birth to healthy children. The teeth are no doubt intended for the mastication of solid food, but it would be a grievous error to think that the child, the moment he begins to cut his teeth, will be able to live upon solid food. Our anxiety, on the contrary, shall be that the delicate masticatory organs are not injured or broken by giving the child too hard food. So when we see a girl is beginning to have the monthly flow, we should not only anxiously watch its course and regularity, but should also watch the other collateral developments of womanhood to be able to determine the better the time when she can become a mother, safely to herself and to her offspring. For it should be borne in mind that while early maturity results in giving birth to short-lived or unhealthy children, it at the same time seriously compromises the health of the mother also." Dr. Sarkar held that the minimum marriageable age for girls should be fixed at 16. Dr. Atmaram Pandurang of Bombay opined that by deferring the marriage of their sisters and daughters to as near the age of 20 years, they would undoubtedly raise the moral, social and physical condition of the people at large.⁴¹

The Special Marriage Bill with its strictly restricted scope met with severe criticism from different parts of India. V. Ramiengar (1826-87), a member of the Madras Legislative Council sent a long letter of protest in course of which he said,

"it is tantamount to telling Young India, Do you set at defiance your social customs and usages and your institution of caste, and we shall be ready to stand by you and support you with all the strength of the strong arm of the law." He deplored that western ideas and western civilization would produce a ferment in course of time but "to hasten such changes by legislation would be highly inexpedient and impolitic." He quoted the speech delivered by Raja Jaikishen Das at Aligarh at the British Indian Association of the North Western Provinces. Mr. Inglis who was against the Bill observed that over five hundred persons of Barielly had submitted a memorial against it. Sir Richard Temple replied that the Memorial had been adopted at a meeting attended by some fourteen Indians of whom twelve were either servants of Government, or Honorary Magistrates, or Pleaders or School teachers who were eager to please Mr. Inglis.⁴² These altercations throw a side-light on the *modus operandi* of manufacturing public opinion in the early seventies of the last century.

In the last three decades of the last century Mahadeva Govinda Ranade (1842-1901) was not only the heart and soul of the reform movement in the social sphere but also its greatest philosopher. Prof. Selby has aptly called him "Our Socrates". Sri Aurobindo makes the following significant remark : "What would Maharashtra of today have been without Mahadeva Govinda Ranade and what would India of today be without Maharashtra?" In 1891 Ranade propounded in the Nagpur Session of the Social Conference the theory of four methods of making a conscious effort for reform. These are : (1) The method of tradition, that is to say, of basing reform on the old texts, (2) appealing to the conscience of the people, (3) enforcing reform by means of penalties, imposed either by the caste or by the State and (4) seceding from the old community and forming a new camp. In explaining the first method Ranade said that this method takes the old texts of scriptures as the basis, and to interpret them so as to suit the new requirements of the times. He cited the instances of Dr. Bhandarkar, Dayananda Saraswati and of the Social Conference as followers of this method. Regarding Dayananda Saraswati he said that the founder of the Arya Samaj

believed that in dealing with the masses it would not do to follow any other method than that of taking the old texts, and making new interpretations of them so as to make all feel that efforts were being made to preserve the old tradition. It is not clear, however, whether Dayananda consciously followed such a policy. Ranade did not mention in this connection the names of Rammohan and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, who were pioneers in adducing proofs of Sanskrit texts for introducing social reforms. This omission is probably due to the fact that neither Rammohan nor Vidyasagar could ever think that they were putting new meaning in the injunctions of scriptures with any ulterior motive. They interpreted the Shastras in the way which they honestly believed to be the only correct explanation.

Rammohan Roy was always anxious to call himself a Hindu and wanted to carry the people with him in the matter of reforms. Keshab Chandra Sen, on the other hand, did not like that the irrational resistance of the Orthodox section should tie down the hands of the liberal-minded people. He was ready to break away from the parent stock if he failed to carry the people with him. During the controversy over the Brahmo Marriage Bill Keshab Chandra informed the Government that the term 'Hindu' does not include the Brahmos, who deny the authority of the Vedas, oppose the observance of caste system and ceremonial rites in worship, and admit into their own fold proselytes from other religious sects. Swami Vivekananda was in favour of going slow so that even the Chandalas would be raised to the position of the Brahmanas. He looked upon society as an organic whole, and was consequently averse to piecemeal reforms attempted by a few intolerant enthusiasts.

Raja Rammohan Roy in his tracts against the *Suttee* referred to the old Dharma Shastras and showed that the horrible practice was not sanctioned by religion or the ancient texts. He was the earliest champion of the rights of women. In 1822 he wrote a book called "Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the ancient rights of Females according to the Hindoo law of Inheritance". In it he pleaded for the abrogation of more modern doctrines limiting women's rights in favour of the older and more liberal view. By citing

texts from ancient legislators like Yagnyavalkya, Manu and Katyayana, he showed that daughters were entitled to one-fourth of the portion which a son could inherit. The Hindu Code framed by the Sovereign Republic of India is the logical fulfilment of the work commenced by Rammohan.

As has been pointed out already, Rammohan did not hesitate to invoke the aid of the Government in putting a stop to evil social practices. He regretted that the Government had not taken any step to regulate the custom of taking a second wife during the life-time of the first. He wrote : "Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorised by the rulers of the empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of the first wife, and to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substantiated, the above law might have been rendered effectual, and the distress of the female sex in Bengal and the number of suicides, would have been necessarily very much reduced".

Rammohan Roy was the first great thinker to suggest a plan for breaking down the barriers of caste system by introducing inter-caste marriage. In this matter, too, he took the help of the permission given in one of the scriptures. In the Mahanirvana Tantra the Saiva form of marriage is thus described : "There is no discrimination of age and caste or race in the Saiva marriage. As enjoined by Siva, one should marry a woman who has no husband and who is not 'Sapinda', that is, who is not within the prohibited degree of marriage". Rammohan wanted to make this form of marriage more widely prevalent in Hindu society. Had his plan been acceptable to the people, widow-marriage, inter-caste and inter-racial marriage would have probably become valid without any fresh legislation.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in his books and articles on widow-remarriage did not say that he was introducing any novel idea. He ransacked the whole range of Sanskrit literature to prove that in ancient India there was no bar against the remarriage of widows. He cited the authority of the Rigveda, Atharva Veda, Vasistha, Manu Samhita, Vishnu Samhita and Yajnavalkya to prove his contention.

The most dynamic exponent of the method of bringing about social reform by the interpretation of old Texts was Swami Dayananda (1824-83). When he was referring to the Government he had in his mind the ideal of national Government responsible to the people, and not the foreign Government. In his *Satyartha Prakash* he stated that Government as the agent of the community must regulate social life. He held that Government should exercise the function of regulating marriage customs and make laws to ensure social happiness. He further emphasised the need for prohibiting early marriage and polygamy by the authority of the State. He argued that if Government did not look to these affairs, citizens would become enfeebled in mind and body. One strong man would be able to overpower one hundred learned but weak men.⁴³ All the efforts of the Government to propagate learning and culture would go in vain, if owing to the prevalence of evil social customs, people lose their physical vigour. In his view the most suitable age for marriage for women was 16 and for men 25. He quoted the authority of Susruta to show that if a girl conceived before she attained the age of 16, there was risk of miscarriage or the birth of a weak child. He pleaded for the free choice of partner in life by the bride and bridegroom themselves. In making this selection due attention should be paid to the parity of qualifications, habits and disposition and not to the caste. He carried a life-long crusade against the caste system. He showed from the Dharmashastra of Apastamba and also proved by adducing reasons that the twice-born classes should have their food cooked by Sudras.⁴⁴ What he preached he practised himself. On being asked whether there is caste system or *Jatibheda*, he said with characteristic humour : "Men, animals and birds are the three *Jatis*". According to him the class to which one belongs cannot be determined on birth. He or she has got to be watched as to the manifestation of his or her qualities. "Classes of all persons", wrote Dayananda, "should be determined according to their qualifications, accomplishments and character in the twenty-fifth or the sixteenth year, according as they are males or females".⁴⁵

For at least one thousand years the Hindu community had shut its portals not only against all outsiders but also against

those who had deviated from orthodox custom in any way. Swami Dayananda was the pioneer in throwing open the doors of the Arya Samaj to all who expressed their willingness to lead the life of an Arya. Rammohan or Vidyasagar did not consider the case of the untouchables which Dayananda advocated so enthusiastically. While the reformers of Bengal appealed to the government to suppress evil social customs, Dayananda would not allow the foreign Government to meddle with the affairs of the Hindu society. He tried to make Indian people self-reliant in matters of social reform.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL THOUGHT OF RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY (1774-1833)

1. The Raja as the Father of Modern Political Movement

As the history of western political thought practically begins with the name Aristotle, the history of political thought in modern India begins with the revered name of Raja Rammohan Roy. After a full swing of twenty-three centuries there is a cry in the Western world to go back to Aristotle and it is not unlikely that when the nature of political thought of the Raja comes to be correctly appreciated, there may be a movement in modern India to go back to the ideal of the Raja, who in so many fields of social and religious movements is regarded as the true pioneer.

The Raja is known all over the world as the founder of the school of comparative religion, as the great Vedantist who, on the one hand, combated the influence of the Christian missionaries and, on the other, laid the foundation of monotheistic revival in India. He is famous as the first advocate of social reform on rational principles, and one of the pioneers of western education in this country. His social and religious reforms were of such absorbing interest that controversy has ever since raged round those ideas to the exclusion of discussions on his fruitful political thought. In order to understand the political thought of modern India it is absolutely necessary to arrive at a correct understanding of the political ideas of the great reformer.

The Raja was by his culture and temperament essentially a philosopher. The western political thought has received its greatest contribution from philosophers like Plato and Aristotle

in the ancient world, from Aquinas and Marsiglio in the middle ages and from Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Bentham and Green in the modern age. India did not suffer from any lack of philosophers in the middle ages, but none of the philosophers from Sankaracharya of the eighth century to Valadeva Vidyabhushan of the eighteenth interested themselves in political speculation. Political speculation can hardly interest anybody where there is absolutely no guarantee of civil liberty, where there is scarcely any existence of enlightened public opinion and where politics is thought to be a concern of the prince alone. Such was the condition of India in the middle ages, under the Rajputs and the Mohammedans. The villages enjoyed indeed a large measure of self-government during the Mohammedan rule, but the outlook of the villagers was essentially parochial in nature. On the breakdown of the Mughal system of administration a period of anarchy and disorder followed. The East India Company resolved to stand forth as the Diwan in 1772 indeed, but it took them more than half a century to establish a well-ordered system of government, securing peace and order for their subjects.

Thus Rammohan grew to manhood in an age, when the sense of moral responsibility of the government to the people of India was being slowly but gradually awakened. The people of Bengal enjoyed a limited measure of civil liberty under the aegis of the British Government for nearly half a century (1772-1821), when Rammohan started the Vernacular Journal, *Sambad Kaumudi* in 1821 to rouse the political consciousness of the people of Bengal.

This was the earliest favourable opportunity which could be availed of to spread political ideas in Bengal. Security of life and property had been ensured in Calcutta, if not in the *mufassil*; the English language had been picked up by a small number of wealthy citizens, and their ideas had been broadened and liberalised by their intercourse with the English merchants and officials in Calcutta.¹ A selected band of devoted followers had gathered round Rammohan with a determination to disseminate English education, and to regenerate the country by means of social and religious reforms. Of these the names of Dwarkanath Tagore, Ramanath

Tagore, Kaleenath Roy, Boykontonath Roy, Ramchunder Bidyabagish, Hurchunder Ghose, Gowrechurun Bonnerjee, Shibchandra Dev and Tarachand Chuckerverty² specially deserve mention as they were closely associated with the Raja in his social, religious, educational and political activities. The names cited above show that the Raja was not a solitary figure in demanding elementary political rights for the people of India.

The number of schools as well as of journals rapidly increased during his life-time and by the time he sailed for England a new generation of Bengalee youths had grown up under the influence of these two liberalising agencies. I shall show in a subsequent chapter how far these youngmen represented the radical opinion in India. The following quotations from contemporary papers will show that the Raja was regarded as the pioneer of political movement in India even by his contemporaries. In 1823 Rammohan made a brilliant defence of the freedom of Press in India in his "*Memorial to the Supreme Court*" and "*Appeal to the king in Council*". He did not live to see the establishment of a free Press in India. But neither the European nor the Indian citizens of Calcutta forgot that it was the effort of the Raja which secured for them the freedom of the Press in 1835. In the Free Press Dinner given to Sir Charles Metcalfe in the Town Hall on the 9th February, 1838, Mr. Leith proposed a toast to "the memory of Rammohan Roy", and Prasannacoomar Tagore rose as a friend of the late Rammohan Roy to thank the liberator of the Press.³

The written evidence of the Raja on the judicial and revenue systems of India submitted to the authorities in England evoked the following comment from the Serampore Missionaries: "Raja Rammohan Roy is said to have suggested various improvements, such as the Trial by Jury, Native Judicial Assessors, Joint Judges, Regular Public Registers, Codes of Civil and Criminal Law, etc..... Should he be instrumental in securing these advantages to the country, not only the present, but every future age will justly consider him a benefactor to the country".⁴ The editor of the *Bengal Spectator* wrote of Rammohan in 1842: "It is to him that we are in great measure indebted for the concession in regard

to the privileges of natives contained in the late Charter (1833)".⁵ The Raja was acknowledged not only in India but also in England as the pioneer in political movement in this country. When various schemes of future government of India were being suggested and discussed in England on the eve of the renewal of the Company's Charter, a humorous writer published a caricature, entitled "Plans for the government of India—a drama". In this drama the following plan is put forward by a candidate for Parliament:- "I propose, therefore, in the first place, that Raja Rammohan Roy be appointed Governor-General of India; that all the judicial posts be filled by Mahomedans,⁶ all the revenue offices by Hindoos, and the police be executed by East Indians or Indo-Britons. The beauty of this plan, ladies and gentlemen, consists in this: the Raja is neither a Hindoo, a Mahomedan, nor a Christian, so that he can have no bias towards any part of the population of India; and the rest being antagonistical, that is opposed to each other, they would keep, by their very opposition, the whole machine of government in steady operation, just as an arch is retained firmly together by contrary pressure on all sides of it."⁷ The pre-eminence of the Raja was recognised even by the authorities of the East India Company. His adopted son was promised a writership by Sir John Hobhouse in 1836.⁸

We find Raja Rammohan Roy fighting vigorously against the corrupt practices in the Hindu religion, against the superstitions and inhuman customs of the Hindu society and against the narrow parochial outlook of Indian mind. But the following quotation from a letter of the Raja will show that behind all his ideas of social and religious reform lay the ideal of bringing about the political regeneration of India. "I regret to say", wrote the Raja in 1828, "that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well-calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of political feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from understanding any difficult enterprise. It is, I think, necessary that some changes should take place in their religion at least for the

sake of their political advantage and social comfort."⁹ Luther and Calvin, the pioneers of the Reformation Movement in the West, did not consciously seek to strengthen the idea of nationality nor to inaugurate democracy, but the earliest prophet of India in the nineteenth century clearly recognised the inter-dependence of political advancement and social and religious progress. His political programme was intimately and indissolubly connected with the social uplift of the nation.

II. His Method of Investigation

Broadly speaking, there are two methods of carrying on political investigation. One is concerned with the philosophical examination of the various concepts upon which the whole science of politics rests. Though this method is now scientifically used by investigators, yet throughout the middle ages and even as late as the eighteenth century, most of the European philosophers reasoned by deduction from general dogmas, based upon belief rather than by induction from observation, investigation and experiment. The other method is known as the inductive and historical method. Like Aristotle, Machiavelli, Bodin and Montesquieu, Raja Rammohan Roy followed this method and like them was interested in practical political problems rather than in general theories concerning the origin and nature of the state. As the political philosophy of Burke is to be gleaned from his various works, so the Raja's political thought is to be gathered by a diligent search of all his works. But while the critical students of Burke are to strain their nerves in reconciling his conflicting ideas and in bringing out a consistent philosophy, the Raja is eminently consistent throughout and one great idea runs through all the books and pamphlets written by him. His political ideas are to be found mainly in the following writings:- (1) Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females, according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance (1822), (2) Petitions against the Press Regulation to the Supreme Court and to the King in Council (1823), (3) A Letter to Lord Amherst on English Education (1823), (4) Final Appeal to the Christian Public (1823), (5) A Brief Sketch of the Ancient and

Modern Boundaries and History of India (1832), (6) Questions and Answers on the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India, etc. (1832), (7) Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans (1831), and (8) his letters and speeches.

Rammohan appears to have been a diligent student of history.¹⁰ The history of ancient India had not been unearthed by the diligent researches of Orientalists in his time, yet from his familiarity with the old literature of the country he was able to arrive at some broad generalisations regarding the constitutional development of India. He was of opinion that India enjoyed constitutional form of government during the two thousand years preceding the Christian era. During these centuries the Brahmanas were the law-makers and the Kshatriyas, the administrators. The laws made by the Brahmanas were not arbitrary in character, but reflected public opinion. The Brahmanas also checked the despotism of the Kshatriyas.¹¹ But when the Brahmanas began to accept offices under the princes, they lost the independence of their character and failed to check the tyranny of the latter. Thus, legislative and executive powers were concentrated in the hands of the same person and consequently, despotism ensued. The Rajputs, according to him, "exercised tyranny and oppression for a period of about a thousand years, when Musalmans from Ghaznee and Ghore, invaded the county, and finding it divided among hundreds of petty princes, detested by their respective subjects, conquered them all successively, and introduced their own tyrannical system of government, destroying temples, universities and all other sacred and literary establishments."¹² He comes to the conclusion that despotism was the normal form of government in India.¹³ Besides despotism, the Raja thinks that the loss of independence of India was due to several other causes. These were "the dissensions and pusillanimous conduct of the native princes and chiefs"; "the ignorance existing in the East of the modern improvements in the art of war";¹⁴ "absence of patriotism amongst the people of India";¹⁵ "our excess in civilization and abstinence from the slaughter even of animals, as well as our division into castes, which has been the cause of want of unity among us".¹⁶ Having diagnosed the causes of downfall of Indians the Raja directed his

whole attention to the amelioration of the condition of the people.

Whenever Rammohan advocated a particular reform or pleaded for the recognition of the rights of the people, he appealed to historical experience. He was familiar not only with the ancient and medieval history of India, but also with the history and working of the British Indian administration. As Dewan he acquired an intimate knowledge of the judicial and revenue systems of India and as such he was in a position to know the abuses from which Indians suffered. Rammohan was equally familiar with the history of Europe and America.¹⁷

Raja Rammohan was no visionary. He knew the limitations of his countrymen, he appreciated the benefits of British rule, but he fought like a lion to secure the rule of law in India and to obtain those political rights, the exercise of which he thought the Indians were capable of. "The peasantry and the villagers in the interior are quite ignorant, and indifferent about either the former or present government", wrote the Raja in 1831, "and attributed the protection they might enjoy or oppression they might suffer to the conduct of the public officers immediately presiding over them". "But men of aspiring character and members of such ancient families as are very much reduced by the present system, consider it derogatory to accept the trifling public situations which natives are allowed to hold under the British Government, and are decidedly disaffected to it. Many of those, however, who engage prosperously in commerce, and of those who are secured in the peaceful possession of their estates by the permanent settlement, and such as have sufficient intelligence to foresee the probability of future improvement which presents itself under the British rules, are not only reconciled to it, but really view it as a blessing to the country. But I have no hesitation in stating, with reference to the general feeling of the more intelligent part of the Native community that the only course of the policy which can ensure their attachment to any form of government, would be that of making them eligible to gradual promotion, according to their respective abilities and merits, to situations of trust and respectability in the state".¹⁸ I have made this lengthy quotation to shew not only the general drift of the Raja's

political thought but also to evince how true these words stand to-day as they stood a century ago, though changes in degree but not in quality have taken place during the century. Despite the claims of the Swarajists, the masses in India are still steeped in ignorance and are still suffering from political indifferentism, and despite the efforts of the Government "men of aspiring character" are still disaffected towards it. While in 1831 situations of trust and responsibility meant a collectorship or judgeship, to-day it means a governorship or a seat in the cabinet or legislature. But I think, the formula of the Raja, including the words "gradual promotion according to their respective abilities and merits" is sufficiently comprehensive in character.

It will be noticed that in the above quotation there is no claim to "freedom as our birthright", nor any appeal to the so-called "natural rights". The absence of such expressions from the writings of the Raja is all the more surprising, because he was deeply interested in the progress of the second Revolution in France and was certainly acquainted with the American and French Declarations of the Rights. But the philosophical training of the Raja enabled him to steer clear of the revolutionary shibboleths and to realise that it is obligation which confers rights and rights cannot exist apart from the state.

III. Influence of Foreign Writers

The western political philosophers who seem to have influenced the mind of the Raja were not Rousseau and Thomas Paine, but Montesquieu, Blackstone and Bentham. From Montesquieu's famous treatise on the "Spirit of the Law" (1748), he derived the ideas of the Separation of Powers and of the Rule of Law, both of which he emphasises again and again in all his writings.¹⁹

Bentham's "Fragment on Government" (1776) and the "Introduction to Morals and Legislation" (1789) had a real hold on the mind of the Raja. "Natural rights", wrote Bentham, "is simple nonsense : natural and imprescriptible rights, rhetorical nonsense—nonsense upon stilts". Such an opinion of the great philosopher might have induced the Raja

to reject the theory of natural rights. The influence of Bentham probably led him to insist on the codification of civil and criminal law and to enunciate the principles of such condification. The influence of Bentham, again, might have given him a clear idea of the distinction between law and morality. In the realm of social reform he was clearly influenced by the utilitarian theory. As Bentham held that contribution to the greatest good of the greatest number will justify the summary abrogation of a practice or principle that originated a thousand years ago, so did the Raja write: "You have at the same time quoted two or three authorities to show, that rites should be performed according to the custom of the country. I reply, female murder, murder of Brahman, parricide and similar heinous crimes, cannot be reckoned amongst pious acts by alleging the custom of a country in their behalf. It is of no consequence to affirm, that this (Sati) is customary in any particular country; if it were universally practised, the murders would still be criminal."²⁰ Bentham's theory of duty of resisting the Government in case the benefit to be secured by it is greater than the evil of revolution, finds an echo in the following sentence of the Raja; "If mankind are brought into existence, and by nature formed to enjoy the comforts of society and the pleasure of an improved mind, they may be justified in opposing any system, religious, domestic or political, which is inimical to the happiness of society, or calculated to debase the human intellect."²¹

In one fundamental matter, however, the Raja differed from the great Utilitarian philosopher. Bentham totally ignored the historical development of a people and assumed that all human beings, irrespective of their race, culture and traditions, are fundamentally the same in their requirements. He was prepared to devise codes for India, Spain, Russia, Morocco and England on one and the same principle.²² But the Raja never dreamt of drawing upon some imaginary universal principles in codifying the laws of India. He was of opinion that "A code of criminal law for India should be founded as far as possible on those principles which are common to, and acknowledged by all the different sects and tribes inhabiting the country."²³ His view was that the code of India should conform to the laws and customs of India and

it must not ignore the traditions of the people in its effort to approach universal principles.

The Raja made a careful study of the English constitution. In the period in which he flourished the best and the most authoritative book on the English constitution was Sir William Blackstone's "Commentaries on the Laws of England." Blackstone's "Commentaries," however, presented only the legal interpretation of the English constitution to the neglect of the actual working of the system. Blackstone could not detect in his time the part played by the cabinet. The Raja was a close student of Blackstone,²⁴ and as such he insisted on the absolute separation of powers in his scheme for reforming the constitution of India. But it must be noticed that in his demand for codification of the laws of India he rejected the authority of Blackstone and relied on that of Bentham. Inspired by the principles of English constitution, the Raja became anxious to secure for his countrymen the same guarantees of individual liberty as were enjoyed by Englishmen. He was the first Indian who imbibed the spirit of the English constitution and demanded civil liberty with all its implications. Fully aware as he was of the limitations of the Indians of his age he never thought of demanding political liberty for them. He was conscious of the ignorance and superstitions that enveloped the minds of his countrymen, who betrayed a deplorable lack of public spirit in their conduct. So he could not think them capable of exercising self-government. The great problem which confronted the well-wishers of India in the first half of the nineteenth century was not autonomy for India but the bare recognition of the principles of justice and security of life and property for the citizens.

IV. The Raja's Love of Liberty

Raja Rammohan Roy's interest in politics sprang from his love of liberty. He was a passionate lover of liberty in all its forms and especially of freedom of thought. In him were blended the finest thoughts of the eastern and western culture. As a Hindu, he could not but be a devotee of the freedom of thought and of religious toleration. In India, however despotic the monarchs might have been, with a few

solitary exceptions, they never systematically interfered with the expression of thought amongst the people as a matter of political creed. His study of western thoughts and movements confirmed his belief in the value of liberty.²⁵

His love of liberty had no parochial outlook about it—it embraced the whole world. As in the spiritual world he stood up as the prophet of universal religion, so in the realm of politics he wanted to see the triumph of the principles of Liberalism everywhere in the world. That there is no inherent antagonism between nationalism and inter-nationalism has been proved by Green and Hobhouse, but Raja Rammohan Roy perceived it early in the nineteenth century, when the idea of nationalism was just coming to the forefront with all the intolerance of a new creed. He believed that Indian Nationalism could gain ground only when the nations of the western world had become free. The free nations of the world would then find a bond of union in the same principle of government.²⁶ This is why the Raja gave a public dinner at the Town Hall when he heard the news of the establishment of constitutional government in Spain; and became overjoyed on hearing of the success of the second French Revolution. When the constitutional government of Naples was overthrown in 1821, he felt so much grief that he had to cancel an engagement with Mr. Buckingham, the editor of the *Calcutta Journal*. "From the late unhappy news," wrote the Raja on that occasion, "I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European colonies²⁷ possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy. Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies, as ours. Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been and never will be ultimately successful."²⁸ This letter explains the cause of his watching the history of the European nations so closely. He believed that if an era of liberalism and nationality dawned upon Europe, the logic of history would carry the liberal movement to India in due course. He could not think of any possible reconciliation between Democracy in the true sense and Imperialism in the old sense of the term. Hence he suspended his urgent work to see the First Reform Bill carried through the Parliament.

After the passing of the Reform Bill he wrote to William Rathbone : "As I publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated I would renounce my connection with this country (England), I refrained from writing to you or any other friend in Liverpool until I knew the result."²⁹ This letter reminds us of the alleged determination of Oliver Cromwell to set sail for America in case of defeat of the Grand Remonstrance in the Long Parliament.

V. His Views on Law, Custom and Morality

In the nineteenth century a war of words was conducted between the Analytical and Historical Schools of Jurisprudence. The former was represented by Austin and the latter by Savigny and Maine. Broadly speaking, the ground of contention between the two schools lay in the question whether the essence of law is the command of the sovereign, or the custom of the people in a community. Austin published his lectures on Jurisprudence 1832 and the works of Maine were published between 1861 and 1884. Savigny, the founder of the Historical School of Jurisprudence, published his first work in Germany in 1814, but the Raja probably had no access to this work. Rammohan by his independent thinking arrived at a conclusion essentially modern in 1830, that is, two years before the publication of Austin's famous work. In his "Essay on the Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property," the Raja says, "In every country, rules determining the rights of succession to, and alienation of, property first originated in the conventional choice of the people, or in the discretion of the highest authority, secular or spiritual, and those rules have been subsequently established by the common usage of the country, and confirmed by judicial proceedings."³⁰ In this passage lies the essential truth of both the Analytical and Historical Schools of Jurisprudence. Historically speaking, a law might have originated either in the choice of the people or in the command of the sovereign, but in order to stand the test of time it must have been subsequently accepted by the people and enshrined in common usage; while analytically speaking it is the command of the sovereign, when he enforces it through judicial decision. "It is maintained by Austin," says Willoughby, "that a custom becomes a law at

the time that it is applied by a court and not before, and this would seem to us the only logical position to take." It will be seen that the Raja arrived at the true nature of law by means of his forceful intellect even before Austin.

The Raja admitted the right of the supreme authority to make whatever alternation or modification it thought fit;³¹ but at the same time he insisted that the long-standing customs of India should not be lightly set aside. If a people had followed a particular custom for centuries in contravention of the authority of some of the sacred writers, the legislators should not attempt to restore the authority of those writers in utter disregard of the long-standing custom of the people. The Raja is of opinion that the people must have found that custom reasonable and "calculated to promote their social interest;" otherwise they would not have followed it for such a long time.³² Here it should be noted that the Raja would advocate adherence to those customs only which satisfy two important conditions—these must be reasonable and these must conduce to the general welfare of the people. He had not the least hesitation in rejecting any custom which was either unreasonable or injurious. "But I am satisfied that an unjust precedent and practice, even of longer standing, cannot be considered as the standard of justice by an enlightened government."³³

The Raja made another capital discovery, namely, the distinction between law and morality before Austin, but the credit of it has been given to the latter. "Austin by establishing the distinction between law and morals," says Justice Markby, "not only laid the foundation for a science of law, but cleared the conception of law and sovereignty of a number of pernicious consequences to which, in the hands of his predecessors, it has been supposed to lead. Laws as Austin has shown, must be legally binding; and yet a law may be unjust." In 1830 the Raja published the "Essay on the Rights of Hindoos over ancestral property according to the law of Bengal," and some letters in the *Bengal Harukaru*. In these publications the Raja upheld the right of the father to sell or mortgage the ancestral property without consulting his sons. He maintained that such an absolute ownership of property has been the customary law of Bengal since the time of Jimutabahana, the

author of the *Dayabhaga*. Jimutabahana maintained that the "texts of Vyasa exhibiting the prohibition, are intended to show a moral offence; since the family is distressed by a sale or other transfer, which augurs a disposition in the person to make an ill use of his power as owner. They are not meant to invalidate the sale or other transfer."³⁴ In explaining this statement Rammohan clearly enunciated the points of difference between the areas covered by Law and Morality. Some of the moral precepts, according to him, are also legally binding, but all of them are not. Conversely, some of the laws are based on moral principles but not all of them. But an immoral law is as valid and binding as moral law. Therefore, a law must be obeyed, whether it is moral or not. The Raja makes his point clear by elaborate examples. "So scriptural precepts and prohibitions are sometimes received as morally and legally binding such as Matthew, Cr. V, C. 32, prohibiting divorcement of a wife without infidelity on her part; and V. 34, prohibiting oaths of all kinds, obeyed by Quakers, both morally and legally; but in some instances they are received as inculcating only moral duty, such as V. 42, "From him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away;" and the very prohibition of oath is disregarded by Christians of other denominations, and their administration legally enforced, although some of the most eminent lawyers declare Christianity to be part and parcel of British Law."³⁵

A writer in the *Calcutta Quarterly Magazine*, No. VI, April-June, 1825, wrote in a Review of Sir F.W.McNaghten's *Considerations on Hindu Law* that any disposal by a father of his ancestral immovables should be nullified, on the principle that we ought "to make that invalid which is considered immoral." The Raja controverted this absurd proposition with a series of illustrations which not only make the distinction between law and morality quite clear, but also show the high ideal entertained by the Raja about the functions of government. "To permit the sale of intoxicating drugs and spirits, so injurious to health, and even sometimes destructive of life, on the payment of duties publicly levied, is an act highly irreligious and immoral : Is the taxation to be, therefore, rendered invalid and payments stopped? To divide spoils gained in a war commenced in ambition and

carried on with cruelty, is an act immoral and irreligious : Is the partition therefore to be considered invalid, and the property to be replaced? To give a daughter in marriage to an unworthy man, on account of his rank or fortune, or other such consideration, is a deed of mean and immoral example : Is the union to be therefore considered invalid, and their children illegitimate? To destroy the life of a fellow-being in a duel, is not only immoral, but is reckoned by many as murder : Is not the practice tacitly admitted to be legal, by the manner in which it is overlooked in courts of justice?

..... The question then arises, how shall we draw a line of distinction between those immoral acts that should not be considered invalid, and those that should be considered invalid, and those that should be regarded as null in the eye of the law? In answer to this, we must refer to the common law and the established usages of every country, as furnishing the distinctions admitted between the one class and the other..... However, when the author of the Review shall have succeeded in inducing British legislators to adopt his maxim, and declare that the validity of every act shall be determined by its consistence with morality, we may then listen to his suggestion, for applying the same rule to the Bengal Law of Inheritance."³⁶ It must be admitted that Raja Rammohan's theory about the spheres of law and morality is much more explicit than the utilitarian doctrine of Bentham, who only emphasised that the existence of a law is no justification of it, unless it agrees with the greatest good of the greatest number.

VI. Law and Public Opinion in India

Before the renewal of the Charter in 1833 there prevailed a good deal of confusion regarding the authority as well as the machinery for making law in India. Laws were then known as Regulations and there were three classes of Regulations. The first were the Rules, Ordinances, and Regulations passed by Government under the 37th Section of the Act of 13 George III (The Regulating Act) for the good order and government of the settlement of Fort William. Such Regulations were not valid until registered by the Supreme Court. They were then sent to England, and exhibited at the

India House. Within sixty days from their being so exhibited, any party could appeal against them. The King might likewise disallow such Regulations within two years from the making thereof. The second class of Regulations were those which related to the government of places outside Calcutta and were known as Rules and Regulations for the provinces. The power of enacting such Regulations was first conferred on the Government by Act of Parliament in 1781. This Act also empowered the authorities in England to disapprove of those Regulations if they saw fit. The third class of Regulations had reference to the imposition of taxes and duties by the Governor, and they were not valid until approved by the Court of Directors and Board of Commissioners.

The Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company (1832) discussed with various witnesses the problem of simplifying the procedure of law-making in India. Broadly speaking, there were two schools of opinion regarding the legislative authority of India. One school, represented by John Sullivan,³⁷ the Madras civilian, Captain T. Macan³⁸ and B. Scutt-Jones,³⁹ the Assistant Secretary of the India Board, held that India must be governed in India through a legislative council. The other school represented by the Right Hon. T.P. Courtenay, M.P.,⁴⁰ and Peter Auber, formerly Secretary to the Government of India and author of "An Analysis of Indian Government," maintained that the British Parliament should continue to be the supreme legislative authority over India as India had not arrived at a situation to legislate for herself and "till that period arrives, it is, I conceive, our duty to legislate for her" (Peter Auber, Q. 1540.). The latter school objected to the vesting of legislative authority in India Government because they thought that the legislative function could not be satisfactorily performed by a legislative council and because they were not prepared to withdraw from King's English subjects the benefits of the English law.⁴¹

Raja Rammohan Roy too protested against the plan of vesting legislative authority in the hands of the India Government. But his grounds of objection were quite different from those held by Peter Auber and T.P. Courtenay. From the study of political philosophy, and especially of the works of Bentham, the Raja must have learnt that laws are the

commands of the supreme governor or the sovereign. His intellect was sharp enough to detect that the Governor-General, in spite of his high-sounding title, was not the supreme ruler. The sovereign power over India is the King-in-Parliament. So the Raja demanded that the laws for India should be made by the King-in-Parliament. Apart from philosophical convictions he entertained a very high idea of disinterestedness and philanthropy of the public men of England. Moreover, the Raja was a fine Greek scholar and from his study of Plato he might have drawn the idea that Law is the expression of Reason without passion. This high ideal of Law led him to oppose any assumption of legislative authority by any servant of the East India Company, however high and exalted his position might be. "If upon representations being made by the local authorities in the country, Your Majesty after due investigation had been pleased with the advice of the high council of the realm to order the abolition of the liberty of the Press in India," wrote the Raja in his memorable petition to the King-in-Council, "Your Majesty's faithful subjects from the feeling of respect and loyalty due to the supreme legislative power, would have patiently submitted, since although they would in that case, still have lost one of their previous privileges, yet their claim to the superintendence and protection of the highest legislative authority, in whom your faithful subjects have unbounded confidence, would still have remained unshaken; but were this Rule and Ordinances of the local Government to be held valid, and thus remain as a precedent for similar proceedings in future, your faithful subjects would find their hope of protection from the Supreme Government cut off, and all their civil and religious rights placed entirely at the mercy of such individuals as may be sent from England to assume the executive authority in this country, or rise into power through the routine of office, and who from long officiating in an inferior station may have contracted prejudices against individuals or classes of men, which ought not to find shelter in the breasts of the Legislator."⁴² More than a century has rolled by since the Raja expressed his desire to be ruled by laws framed in England. Such an opinion would seem to many to-day to be a crude absurdity. But the theory of separation of powers was such a cardinal principle in the

political ideal of the Raja that he was prepared to go any length to secure its observance. He believed that if a legislative council were established in India, it would be dominated by the executive authority; and that the executive could never rise above passion or prejudice against a class or a sect. Hence he thought it better to rely on the enlightened public opinion of England than to be governed by a bureaucratic legislature. Could he have been sure of the success of representative system in India he would certainly have welcomed the idea of an Indian Legislature.

Another point of interest in this connection is the question whether the Raja was in favour of the assumption of immediate control of India by the Crown. The passage quoted above shows that he wanted laws to be ultimately passed by Parliament. Does this show that he liked to see the power of the Company at an end? His private secretary, Mr. Arnot,⁴³ tells us that he had no such idea. "He stood up firmly against the proposals of his more radical friends," writes Mr. Arnot, "for exchanging the East India Company's rule for a colonial form of Government. His argument was, that in all matters connected with the colonies, he had found, from long observation, that the Minister was absolute, and the majority of the House of Commons subservient; there being no body of persons there who had any adequate motives to thwart the Government in regard to distant dependencies of the British Crown. The change proposed was, therefore, in his estimation, a change from a limited government, presenting a variety of efficient checks on any abuse of its power, for an absolute despotism."⁴⁴ It is quite easy to believe that Rammohun, as the student of Blackstone, laid emphasis on constitutional checks and balances. The statement of the Raja on the judicial system of India before the Select Committee further shows that he was in favour of the double government of the Court of Directors and the Board of Control. In advocating legislation by the authorities in England instead of by Government in India he wrote ;—"As the affairs of India have been known to the authorities in Europe, for such a series of years, in matters of legislation, the local government should be bound to carry into effect any regulations or order in judicial and revenue matters sent out, formally enacted by the *British Government, or the Court of Directors* under the

express sanction of the Board of Commissioners for the control of the affairs of India, although the local government might still remonstrate against them to the home authorities."⁴⁵

But the Raja was aware of the inherent difficulty of making law from England for a distant country, in an age when rapid communication was not feasible. He suggested three methods of far-reaching consequences for ensuring good laws for India. The first and foremost is the free Press. He adduced four different arguments to show that freedom of the Press was necessary for making good laws for India : First, the public should have the power of placing before the Government their opinion on matters affecting the general interest of the community. The Government should have some means of knowing the sentiment of the people. Freedom of the Press would make laws correspond to public opinion.⁴⁶ Secondly, the people would be able to ventilate their grievances through the Press and try to have them redressed. If grievances remain unrepresented and unredressed they might cause revolution. But the Free Press would obviate such a danger.⁴⁷ Thirdly, freedom of the Press would enable the people of India to appeal to the honour and justice of the British nation against any possible oppressive and tyrannical act of India Government.⁴⁸ Fourthly, it would enable the Court of Directors to ascertain correctly "whether the systems introduced in their possessions, prove so beneficial to the natives of the country, as their authors might fondly suppose or would have others believe, and whether the Rules and Regulations which may appear excellent in their eyes, are strictly put in practice."⁴⁹ Raja Rammohun's forceful arguments might have convinced even some of the high Government officials in India. Mr. Holt Mackenzie, serving as the Secretary to Government in the Territorial Department between 1816 and 1830 and also as a member of the College Council (and hence in touch with the Raja) and of the Committee of Public Instruction for a considerable time, appears to have echoed the views of the Raja in his answers to the questions of the Select Committee in 1832. He held that the discussion of laws by Indians through the means of the public Press would give them a right to exercise judgment in matters of legislation,

but it would not entail any danger to the British power in India.⁵⁰ The second method suggested by the Raja for securing good laws for India was the appointment of commissions of inquiry from time to time. Thus writes the Raja : "Your Majesty's faithful subjects are aware of no means by which impartial information on these subjects (that is, the ascertaining of the real value of the systems introduced in India) can be obtained by the Court of Directors or other authorities in England, except in one of the following modes : either, first, by the existing of a Free Press in this country and the establishment of Newspapers in the different Districts under the special patronage of the Court of Directors and subject to the control of law only, or secondly by the appointment of a commission composed of gentlemen of intelligence and respectability, totally unconnected with the Governing Body in this country, which may, from time to time, investigate on the spot, the condition of Your Majesty's faithful subjects, and judge with their own eyes regarding the operation of the systems of law and jurisprudence under which they live."⁵¹ Of these two methods the Raja preferred the Free Press to the Commission as the latter would entail great labour and expenses and as "the publication of truth and the natural expression of men's sentiments through the medium of the Press, entail no burden on the state."⁵²

The third method which the Raja suggested for facilitating the task of Parliament in making good laws for India was to ascertain the opinion of the aristocracy of wealth and intellect in India regarding any proposed law. In Bengal all the public functionaries in the interior of the country had by a specific enactment the privilege of suggestion any new laws and regulations that might appear to them expedient. These suggestions were taken into consideration by the Governor-General in Council, and if approved, a Regulation was framed accordingly.⁵³ Rammohun's proposal was that not only the public functionaries but also the intelligent and wealthy members of the public should be consulted before making any law. "With this view every such project of law before it is finally adopted by the Government, should be printed and a copy sent directly from government not only to the judges of the Indian Dewany Adalat and the members of the Board of Revenue, etc., but also to the advocate-general on the part

of the honourable Company, the principal Zamindars such as the Rajas of Burdwan, Bihar, Benares, etc., and to the highly respectable merchants such as Jagat Set at Murshidabad, Babu Baijnath at Patna and the representatives of Babu Manohar Das at Benares, also to the Muftis of Sadar Dewani Adalat, and the head native officers of the Boards of Revenue, for their opinion on each clause of the Regulation to be sent in writing within a certain period. Because these being the persons who are affected by the Regulations, they will be cautious of recommending any that is injurious. It should still be optional, however, with government to be guided or not by their suggestions."⁵⁴ But the Raja would not vest the final authority in the hands of the Indian Government. He proposed that the proposal of the Government along with the observations made by the parties mentioned above should be sent for consideration to the Court of Directors and Parliament. A standing committee of the House of Commons should scrutinise all these and report to the House for their amendment and confirmation. Thus, according to Rammohun, the power of initiative should belong to the Indian Government, that of criticism to the Indian public and officials, and the power of enacting laws to the British Parliament. It may be noted here that James Mill, the disciple of Bentham and writer of the history of India, also desired that the supreme authority in making amending or repealing laws should be vested in Parliament.⁵⁵

The above-mentioned suggestion of the Raja for eliciting the opinion of the public on any proposed measure of legislation seems to be hopelessly antiquated. He thought that laws or regulations, as they were called at that period, affect only the Zamindars, merchants and officials. The idea that laws affect as much the humblest of the citizens as the highest and that every adult and sane member of the community should have a voice in the making of laws, did not then find acceptance in any state in the world. Some Philosophical Radicals like Bentham were demanding universal suffrage indeed, but their proposals were treated as Utopian ideals. Rammohun was not a Utopian idealist and as such in the then state of the country he could not demand full-fledged representative and responsible government. In suggesting that the aristocracy of wealth and intellect alone should criticise bills, he showed

indeed some bias for an aristocratic form of government. But his sympathy for constitutional government in every part of Europe, especially for the First Reform Bill in England, proves that he had a firm faith in democracy. Here he was dealing with practical affairs as a practical statesman. He could not forget for a moment that India was a dependency and not a free country, neither could he convince himself of the existence of an active public opinion and intense patriotic sentiment in India. In the absence of public opinion he thought it useless to demand a legislative council for India.

Many other witnesses before the Select Committee, however, thought that India should have a legislative council with one or more Indian members in it. James Mill proposed a legislative council, consisting of a person well acquainted with the laws of England, one or more of the most experienced of the Company's servants, an Indian of the highest character and qualifications, and a philosopher, "capable of bringing to the great work the aid of general principles." All the members, of course, would be nominated and the legislature must be strictly and completely under the control of the British Parliament.⁵⁶ According to John Sullivan the legislative council should be composed of the Governor-General as president, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as vice-president, the members of the executive council of the Governor-General, and one or perhaps more of the present judges of the Supreme Court, with the ministerial officers of the Government, and two or three Indians of rank and character. He was of opinion that the selection of the members should be left in the hands of the authorities in England.⁵⁷ Holt Mackenzie suggested that the legislative council should consist of the Governor-General and his Council, the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Lieutenant-Governors and their Secretaries; the chief public functionaries, judicial and revenue, with some military officers, and gentlemen out of service, including Indians, to be appointed by the Governor-General.⁵⁸ The opinion of A. D. Campbell, formerly Secretary to the Board of Revenue and Magistrate, was somewhat similar to that expressed by Rammohun. He desired that the local government should select both Indians and Europeans to furnish their opinions, in writing, on the laws, and to suggest such new laws as they might consider

expedient. "I say in writing because I would include so numerous a body of the local functionaries, as well as others, that it might be impossible without putting a stop to the details of civil government to congregate the whole together at one place. Independently of these local members, other natives and Europeans might be selected from each of the presidencies to attend the Governor-General, in whom the legislative authority should centre."⁵⁹ Mr. Campbell, however, hit upon the real difficulty in including Indian members in the legislative council in the following words:- "The natives unaccustomed to such a situation, will at first feel much at a loss to collect the opinions of their countrymen; and unless a popular selection is made, the people, accustomed as they are to represent all their grievances to the local European officers, will be inclined to place more confidence in them than even in their own countrymen, unless they have a voice in their nominations, or they are known to them personally or by repute."⁶⁰

Rammohun knew that if any legislative council were established in India, the executive and the judicial officers would have the preponderant voice in it, and the inclusion of one or two Indian nominated members would not obviate the danger—an unreasonably great danger was it to him—of uniting the executive, judicial and legislative power in one body. Such a consideration might have induced him to eschew all idea of a legislative council in India and to propose the extremely moderate scheme of consulting a few leading citizens of India. But, not to speak of the inclusion of Indians in the legislative council, even this moderate proposal of the Raja was not accepted by the authorities in England.

VII. Civil Liberty and the Rule of Law

Every modern state guarantees, through its public law, some particular rights known as civil rights or civil liberty, to its citizens against the interference of the government. Rammohun knew that these rights are not inherent in man and these can exist only in a democratically organised state. But at the same time he was perfectly aware of the fact that India was neither a sovereign state nor a democracy. Under these circumstances the people of India could hardly enjoy

any civil liberty. Yet the Raja held that the Indians "are fortunately placed by Providence under the protection of the whole British Nation, or that the King of England and his Lords and Commons are their Legislators, and that they are secured in the enjoyment of the same civil and religious privileges that every Briton is entitled to in England."⁶¹ He did not formally discuss what these specific rights or privileges were, but by implication he made it quite clear that he understood by civil liberty, the right of life and liberty, the right of property, freedom of opinion, and freedom of religious worship.⁶² We know that Rammohun was a warm admirer of the British Government In India. His appreciation of the British rule was due to the realisation of the fact that the English people delivered the Indians from the tyranny of their former rulers, under whom the people were never secure in the enjoyment of civil rights. He concluded his "Final Appeal to the Christian Public" by thanking "the Supreme Disposer of the Universe, for having unexpectedly delivered this country, from the long continued tyranny of its former Rulers, and placed it under the Government of the English, a nation who not only are blessed with the enjoyment of civil and political liberty, but also interest themselves in promoting liberty and social happiness, as well as free inquiry into literary and religious subjects; among those nations to which that influence extends."⁶³ The Raja in his appeal to the King in Council drew attention to the fact that under the Mohammedan rule the Hindus enjoyed every political privilege in common with Mussulmans,⁶⁴ being eligible to the highest offices in the state, entrusted with the command of armies and the government of provinces and often chosen as advisers to their Prince. But under the East India Company Indians were compensated for the loss of those privileges by the more secure enjoyment of civil and religious rights. "Notwithstanding the loss of political rank and power", observed the Raja, "they considered themselves much happier in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty than were their ancestors." But the Raja demanded again and again that these rights should be securely maintained by the British Government, otherwise "the basis on which they have founded their hopes of comfort and happiness under the British Power, will be destroyed". Rammohun Roy suggested some

reforms, by which the civil rights might be effectively secured for the people of India. For securing life and liberty he demanded codification of law, separation of powers, integrity, efficiency and independence of judges, introduction of the jury system and the Habeas Corpus Act, and the legal responsibility of officials. He held that the civil and criminal laws should be codified in such a way as not to require any explanation by a reference to any other books of authority, either Mohammedan or Christian.⁶⁵ Separation of powers was to him the cardinal principle of good government; he was so much obsessed with Montesquieu's doctrine that he could not think of any case where the union of powers might be required to ensure efficient administration. According to him, neither the Governor General nor any of the civil servants of the Company should be allowed to issue Regulations and Ordinances.⁶⁶ He strongly protested against the union of magisterial and judicial power with the office of the Collector.⁶⁷ "In every civilised country", observed the Raja, "rules and codes are found proceeding from one authority, and their execution left to another. Experience shows that unchecked power often leads the best men wrong and produces general mischief."

The judicial administration in India was held in low repute throughout the period of Company's rule.⁶⁸ Rammohun suggested various reforms for bringing about purity in the administration of justice.⁶⁹ One of the reforms suggested by him was the "superintendence of public opinion". His idea was that the people were to watch the judicial proceedings and to see that the judges followed the principles of law and equity. Every person who chose should have a right to be present during the trial of cases in any court, and to make notes of cases decided, and publish them in any manner he might think proper for general information. He was aware of the fact that this right might be abused by evil-minded persons through misrepresentation of the case. He suggested that if such wilful misrepresentation were judicially established before a competent tribunal, the man should be punished.

Apart from the ignorance of judges about the vernacular of litigants, the want of public supervision of judicial proceedings, and the insufficiency of the number of judges,

the course of justice was vitiated by the wide prevalence of perjury and forgery among the litigants. The sovereign remedy of these evils was, according to Rammohun, the remodelling of the old Panchayet system. He found that the Panchayet system in Bengal was very defective. The Panchayet was not guarded against private influence or partiality, was not regular in its sittings and had no power to compel the attendance of witnesses. His plan of reviving the Panchayet system, however, bore a distinct bias for centralisation and was diametrically opposed to the course which has been recently adopted by the various Village Self-government Acts. His plan was to use the old system as the basis of the trial by jury.⁷⁰ According to him, three, five or a greater number of respectable Indians should be selected as jurors. Three times the number required for sitting on a trial should be summoned, and the persons actually to serve should be taken by lot, so that neither the judges nor the parties might be able to know beforehand what persons would sit on the trial of a cause. The European judge at the station (Zillah or city) should keep a list of persons qualified to serve as jurors. Cases should be conducted in vernacular, so that the jury might understand the proceedings. Publicity should be as much fostered as possible, and the jury should be kept apart and required to decide without separating. A European Judge should be present to maintain order and an Indian Judge to guard against any private influence. Where judge and jury were unanimous, no appeal should be permitted. He thought that "it is the only system by which present abuses consisting of perjury, forgery and corruption can be removed". Rammohun never dreamt of reviving the old system of local self-government, in which every village maintained through its Panchayet peace and order and got its cases decided locally. He desired, above all, purity of judicial administration, and his experience of village life in Bengal warned him not to rely on the old type of village Panchayet for the maintenance of justice. It should be noted, however, that he believed that it was only by the co-operation and vigilance of the people and the association of Indian functionaries with the European judges that fair and impartial justice can be secured.

He desired that the judges of the Sudder Dewany Adawlut should have the power of issuing the writ of Habeas Corpus according to the practice of the English courts. To protect the citizens of the Mofussils from illegal arrest and imprisonment he suggested that one of the circuit judges should investigate such cases and report to the Sudder Dewany Adawlut.⁷¹

The Raja also emphasised the necessity of enforcing responsibility of every action of an officer in his official capacity through judicial proceedings. "The Judges of Circuit should also be required to keep a vigilant watch over the proceedings of the magistrates within his jurisdiction, and to institute an investigation personally and on the spot, into any complaint preferred against them, whenever he sees sufficient ground for adopting this prompt measure."⁷² Similarly, the assistant judge, according to the Raja, should be authorised to "receive written complaints of any abuse of their power from persons who feel themselves oppressed by the police."⁷³ He suggested various other practical reforms for securing fair justice. He proposed that the Sudder Ameens should be stationed at proportionate distances in different parts of the district, so that suitors might not have to travel far from their homes to file their bills and afterwards to seek and obtain justice.⁷⁴ This reform has been subsequently introduced. To secure purity of judicial administration, he also demanded that the salary of Indian officers in the judicial department should be substantially increased.⁷⁵ For the same reason he was against the proposal of reducing the salary of the European judges.⁷⁶ Thus it will be seen that the Raja, unlike the nationalists of the present day, thought that fair and efficient administration could be secured in a country like India, where the majority of the people are ignorant, and consequently the temptation to be corrupt is great on the part of the officers, only by paying high salary to both the Indian and the European officers.

Rammohun was an adherent of the doctrine of equality before the eye of law indeed, but in one particular case he was ready to allow some departure from it. He thought it expedient for Government to order persons of high rank to

be tried by a special commission, composed of three or more persons of the same rank.⁷⁷

Rammohun held that the security of property is one of the fundamental rights of the subjects. In his "Letters on the Hindu Law of Inheritance," he derided the opinion of "A Hindu" that "All subjects are dependent, the King alone is free." He remarked, "I trust your learned correspondent does not mean, by the above text, to establish that all subjects have a dependent right in their lawful possessions, and that the King is privileged to take or give them away at his pleasure." Here the Raja hinted the right of property is inviolable even against the government.

Rammohun was a staunch adherent of the doctrine of religious toleration. One of the reasons which led him to welcome British rule in India was the policy of religious toleration, advocated by the English. Like Locke, Rammohun held that the State should not interfere the subjects in religious affairs. He gave expression to his views on religious liberty in his characteristic manner : "True Religion needs not the aid of the sword or the legal penalties for its protection."⁷⁸ He emphasised the necessity of maintaining religious toleration by the Government of India especially because the conquerors had always scoffed at the religion of the conquered and had tried to impose their religion on the subject-people. He cited the examples of the Greeks and the Romans, who being idolaters themselves, mocked at the monotheistic religion of the Jews. He hoped that the English would not follow the example of the conquerors of the past. He protested against the method of preaching adopted by the Christian missionaries in the following words :—"To introduce a religion by means of abuse and insult, or by affording the hope of worldly gain, is inconsistent with reason and justice. If by the force of argument they can prove the truth of their own religion and the falsity of that of Hindus, many would of course embrace their doctrines, and in case they fail to prove this, they should not undergo such useless trouble, nor tease Hindus any longer by their attempt at conversion."⁷⁹

VIII. Freedom of the Press

Rammohun attached the greatest importance to the right of expressing one's opinion freely. His Memorial to the

Supreme Court and Appeal to the King in Council regarding the freedom of the Press are regarded as "the Areopagitica of Indian History." Like Milton, he drew upon History as well as the broad principles of Political Science to show that the freedom of the Press is as beneficial to the governed as to the government. Like Milton, Rammohun shows that whatever is of highest excellence in government, or of greatest virtue and enlightenment in society, can be secured only by the freedom of the Press; while licensing and tyranny of opinion have always gone hand in hand with bad government. But it must be admitted that Milton's work covers a much wider ground than that of Rammohun. Milton raised his noble voice on behalf of the freedom of mind itself,⁸⁰ because he had to contend against the licensing of all kinds of publications. Rammohun's advocacy was only on behalf of a particular kind of publication, namely the periodical publication; because the Bengal Government's Regulation of 1823 aimed at restricting not all kinds of publications, but only the periodical Press.

Rammohun claimed that the Indian subjects of His Majesty had enjoyed the liberty of the Press "for so many years since the establishment of the British Rule."⁸¹ This statement is true only in the sense that there was no periodical Press owned and managed by Indians before 1816 and consequently there was no necessity for restricting it; and even when the Indian periodicals came into existence it was found impossible to enforce the restriction against it. Otherwise a general restriction against the Press had begun to be imposed as early as 1791 in Bombay and 1799 in Madras and Bengal.⁸² In 1818, during the administration of Lord Hastings censorship of the Press was abolished in Bengal.⁸³ The Court of Directors did not like to sanction this change. In the draft of a despatch the Court remarked: "After the fullest consideration which we have been able to give to the subject, it is our decided conviction that neither the Government, nor the public, nor the editors, will benefit from the change." This draft was sent up officially to the India Office for the sanction of the Board of Commissioners, on the 7th April, 1820; but the draft was never returned by the Board, nor any communication respecting it was sent to the Court. So the Court of Directors could not prevent the Governments of Bengal and Bombay

from giving considerable freedom to the Press in India. The Court of Directors made another attempt to put severer restrictions on the Press in India on the 17th January, 1823, when they addressed a long despatch to the Right Honourable Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, praying for a new Act of Parliament to enlarge the powers of the Indian Governments for checking the abuses of the Press. In this despatch they made the following suggestion : "Were the Local Governments empowered to grant and withdraw licenses to printing presses, and to put down any press printing without a license, such a check would be universally applicable, and would even supersede the necessity of the censorship." This letter was considered by the ministers who, however, refused to submit to Parliament any measure for extending the authority of the provincial Governments.⁸⁴

Rammohun thought that by issuing the Regulation for licensed Press on the 14th March, 1823, "the local executive authorities suddenly assumed the power of legislation in matters of the highest moment." He prayed to the King in Council to prohibit any authority in India from assuming the legislative power.⁸⁵ But from the tenor of the correspondence cited above, it appears that the idea of requiring license from the Press, occurred first to the Directors and it is quite likely that Mr. John Adam, the acting Governor General, issued the regulation at their suggestion.

Rammohun Roy could not have been aware of the suggestion regarding the licensing of the Press, made by the Directors. Yet he answered every one of the objections that could have been raised and were actually raised by the Directors, against the freedom of the Press. The Directors held that 'a free Press is a fit associate and necessary appendage of a representative constitution ;' and as the Government of India can in no sense be called a representative or a popular Government, there should be no freedom of Press in India. Rammohun showed that as the Government of India was not representative, it was all the more necessary to have freedom of discussion. A free Press would prove to be the most excellent channel of information to the supreme authorities in England.⁸⁶

"While men can easily represent the grievances arising from the conduct of the local authorities to the Supreme Government, and thus get them redressed, the grounds of discontent that excite revolution are removed."⁸⁷ He asserts, therefore, that a free Press has never yet caused a revolution in any part of the world. On the other hand, revolutions had frequently shaken the foundation of those despotic governments which had tried to keep the people in ignorance. He illustrates his remark by the following historical examples : "Notwithstanding the tyranny and oppression of Gengis Khan and Tamerlane, their empire was not so lasting as that of the Romans, who to the proud title of conquerors, added the more glorious one of Enlighteners of the world."⁸⁸ Moreover, 'a Government conscious of rectitude of intention, cannot be afraid of public scrutiny by means of a Press.'

The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors asserted⁸⁹ that 'in India public opinion cannot be said to exist,' and that the executive officers of the Government of India are ultimately responsible to the public opinion in England ; hence discussions should take place in England and not in India. Rammohun held that there was a number of enlightened people in India and that if freedom of discussion were allowed, they could explain to the public the excellence of the system of government established by the British in India.

The Directors were of opinion that the free Press, by discussing the conduct of the administrators, would diminish respect for authority.⁹⁰ The Raja quoted the conclusion of his 'Final Appeal to the Christian Public' and some remarks of the *Friend of India* to show that free discussions had not brought hatred and contempt upon the government. He further asserted that free discussion enhance the prestige and popularity of the government. He also held that public conduct of public men should not pass unnoticed.*

* James Sutherland in his evidence before the Select Committee said that free discussion in the Press had acted as a check on the conduct of public functionaries and occasionally led to very useful investigations (q. 1149). Holt Mackenzie said that free

The Directors were of opinion that the newspapers and other periodicals were not the best vehicles of conveying instruction ; and that their general aim was to gratify the curiosity rather than to enlighten understanding. The Raja asserted, on the other hand, that the four vernacular newspapers had, by introducing free discussion, diffused knowledge, improved the minds and ameliorated the condition of the people.⁹¹ Further, he brought to the notice of the King in Council that in the past high offices had been open to the people and for securing them people tried to improve their mind; but now in the absence of such an incentive the liberty of the Press alone could bring them distinction in the world of letters.

The Directors thought that free discussions in newspapers might goad on the sepoys to revolt. Mr. Elphinstone observed in 1832 that, "In other countries, the use of the press has gradually extended along with the improvements of the government and the intelligence of the people; but we shall have to contend at once with the most refined theories of Europe, and with the prejudices and fanaticism of Asia, both rendered doubly formidable by the imperfect education of those to whom every appeal will be addressed. Is it possible that a foreign government, avowedly maintained by the sword, can long keep its ground in such circumstances?"⁹² Rammohun took great pains to prove that the loyalty of the people of India to the British Government was deep and unshakable. As proofs of loyalty he said that the people entrusted Government with their money, while under previous governments they had buried their riches under the ground, that the landlords improved their lands without fear, that the citizens of Calcutta offered prayers for the victory of the British during the third Mahratta and the Nepal wars; that the enlightened people frequently made favourable comments on the fair justice and solicitude shown by the Government for the spread of education and looked upon the English as deliverers rather than as conquerors. So he pleaded for

discussion would contribute to the stability of the Government, if it resulted in securing better laws (q. 846).— Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee (Public), 1832.

allowing the people to discuss all questions freely that good government might be secured and knowledge might be spread.

He held that the law of libel was sufficient for maintaining liberty under proper restraint.⁹³ But if the authorities insisted on imposing additional restrictions on Indian Press, the additional penalties should be "legally inflicted." Mr. F. Warden, formerly member of Council at Bomaby and the censor of the Bombay Press, expressed a similar view in 1832.*

Raja Rammohun thus, did not claim absolute liberty for the Indian Press. His idea was not to subvert the existing government, but to strengthen and popularise it. He anticipated many of the arguments of John Stuart Mill on behalf of Liberty in his appeals for freedom of Press. "Every good ruler," wrote the Raja, "who is convinced of the imperfection of human nature, and reverences the Eternal Governor of the world, must be conscious of the great liability to error in managing the affairs of a vast empire; and therefore he will be anxious to afford every individual the readiest means of bringing to his notice whatever may require his interference. To secure this important object, the unrestrained liberty of publication

* "If any regulations more arbitrary or restrictive than the laws of the realm be deemed necessary for India, which I do not admit, they should be incorporated in a judicial enactment; and all breaches of them, arising out of a false and malicious perversion of views or motives by which any of the proceedings of the public authorities, or the conduct of official functionaries are animadverted on or discussed in periodical journals, should be punished by fine or imprisonment, by the verdict of a jury, and the sentence of a court of judicature, or by the latter alone, where the former institution does not exist; but in no instance by summary punishment, either by the authority of the Government or of a court of law".—Appendix to Report from Select Committee (1832), p. 290.

The Directors thought that an impartial jury could not be found in India. But John Sullivan said in his evidence that not only an impartial European jury, but also mixed jury of Indians and Europeans could be easily secured in India.—Minutes of Evidence, q. 848.

is the only effectual means that can be employed."

The Raja's advocacy of freedom of the Press failed indeed to secure the redress which he expected to get from the Supreme Court and from the King in Council. But during the administration of Lord William Bentinck the law against the Press was not enforced. It is to be noted here that Lord Bentinck, as the Governor of Madras, opposed the freedom of the Press. "It is necessary in my opinion," he wrote in 1807, "for the public safety that the Press in India should be kept under the most rigid control."⁹⁴ Is it not likely that the noble Lord was influenced by the opinion of the Raja in this instance, as he was influenced by the latter's views regarding the Suttee and the introduction of English education?

IX. The State in relation to Economic Activity

Rammohun Roy did not clearly formulate any principle by which the scope and limit of the economic activity of the state could be defined. As in politics so in economics he was guided by practical conditions, actually existing in the country, rather than by any theoretical or philosophical consideration. Hence his idea about the economic activity of the state can be explained only by using negative terms. He was affected neither by the Socialistic thought of the Utopians, nor by the *Laissesz-faire* theory of the classical school of economists. He was a firm believer in the institution of individual property, but he was not a strict individualist. He thought it a duty of the government to protect the weak and the helpless against the oppression of the strong.

In his "Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property" he maintained that the "validity of existing titles to property" should not be disturbed, nor the "contracts founded on the received interpretation of the law" should be violated by the Government⁹⁵. He held, in opposition to the theory of many Anglo-Indian writers, that in ancient India land was individual property and not the absolute property of the state.⁹⁶ He was of opinion that the Government in the Mohammedan period received one half of the produce of

the soil 'in return for its general protection.' He, therefore, advocated that the benefit of permanent settlement should be extended to the cultivators, the farmers and labourers in every part of the country.⁹⁷ He did not believe that the direct management of land by the Government could be efficient. "The temporary increase of revenue to Government under its own management would also have soon fallen off, through the misconduct and negligence of the revenue officers, as shewn by innumerable instances in which estates were kept *khas*, i.e., under the immediate management of Government."⁹⁸ As a strong individualist the Raja held that "every man is entitled by law and reason to enjoy the fruits of his honest labour and good management."⁹⁹

The Raja was in favour of maintaining a prosperous middle class in the country. So he preferred the Zamindari settlement to the Ryotwari settlement. He held that under the former at least one class of people could attain to prosperity but under the latter system everyone remained wretched.

In opposition to the Laissez-faire theory of contemporary England, Rammohun held that it was the duty of government to protect the helpless cultivators against the powerful Zamindars and the Hindu females against the oppression of their male relatives. He contended that the Government had declared by Reg. I of 1793, Sec. 8, Art. I, that 'it is its right and its duty to protect the cultivators as being from their situation most helpless.' But the Government afforded very little legal protection to the cultivators.¹⁰⁰ The heart of the Raja was moved with pity on seeing the wretched condition of the peasantry, living under the Zamindari as well as under the Ryotwari settlement. "In short, such is the melancholy condition of the agricultural labourers, that it always gives me the greatest pain to allude to it." In order to ameliorate the condition of the peasants he suggested that the alleged right of the Zamindar to increase the rent of the ryot should be altogether abolished. If it be urged against such a policy that it would violate the long-standing practice of the country and the principles laid down in the Regulations, that is, interfere with the right of the Zamindar to do

whatever they liked with their ryots, the Raja answered, "I am satisfied that an unjust precedent and practice, even of longer standing cannot be considered as the standard of justice by an enlightened Government."¹⁰¹ He further appealed to the Government to lower its demand upon the Zamindars and ask the latter to make a proportionate reduction in the rent of the cultivators.

If the land revenue be reduced, there would be a fall in the income of the Government. In order to make good the loss the Raja suggested three methods. The first was the taxation on luxuries and on "such articles of use and consumption as are not necessities of life."¹⁰² The second was the reduction of expenses of the revenue establishment. He suggested that Indians of respectability might be appointed collectors on a salary of about three or four hundred rupees per month, in place of European collectors drawing a salary of a thousand or fifteen hundred rupees per month. He quoted the authority of men like Sir Thomas Munro, Mr. Robert Richards and Mr. H. Ellis to show the expediency and advantage of appointing Indian revenue officers to the higher situations in the revenue department. Rammohun held that the suggested reform, if carried out, would not only help the over-burdened peasants but also make the higher class of Indians contented and therefore efficient. In order to reduce the cost of administration the Raja suggested another reform of far-reaching consequence. This was no less than the substitution of a militia force for the standing army. He maintained that permanent settlement with the cultivators, would make them so much attached to the British Government that it would be unnecessary to maintain a standing army. "This consideration is of great importance," observed the Raja, "in respect to the natives of the upper and western provinces, who are distinguished by their superior bravery, and form the greater part of the British Indian army. If this race of men, who are by no means deficient in feelings of personal honour and regard for family respectability, were assured that their rights in the soil were indefeasible so long as the British power should endure, they would from gratitude and self-interest at all

times be ready to spend their lives and property in its defence. The saving that might be effected by this liberal and generous policy, through the substituting of a militia force for a great part of the present standing army, would be much greater than any gain that could be realised by any system of increasing land revenue that human ingenuity could devise. How applicable to this case is the following line of the Persian sage, Sadi: "Be on friendly terms with the subjects, and rest easy about the warfare of thine enemies; for to an upright prince his people is an army."¹⁰³

The question of the 'drain' of Indian wealth was discussed for the first time in the periodical Press by the Serampore Missionaries, who from a perusal of Tucker's 'Review of India' and other books and papers, came to the conclusion that "the sum annually derived from India through dividends of Indian stock, the industry of such of her sons as are enabled from year to year to return with a competence and through various other ways amounts to full three millions sterling."¹⁰⁴ To these three millions they added another three millions derived as profits of commerce. Rammohun corroborated the statement of the missionaries by referring to the evidence of Messrs. Lloyd and Melville before the Select Committee of the House of Lords (1830) and to a work entitled "On Colonial Policy as applicable to the Government of India" by a 'Servant of the Company.' He quoted from the latter work the observation that "the aggregate of tribute, public and private, so withdrawn from India from 1765 to 1820 (is calculated) at 110,000,000."

With a view to checking such a huge drain of Indian wealth he suggested that the Europeans accumulating capital in India should be encouraged to settle in India so that the wealth might not go out of the country.¹⁰⁵ The problem of colonisation of India by the British was discussed seriously in India in his time. As many as four voluminous reports were submitted by the Select Committee on Colonisation and Settlement of India to the House of Commons. In Bengal men like Dwarkanath Tagore and Rammohun Roy warmly supported the scheme of colonisation. Both of them delivered speeches in the Town Hall on the 15th December, 1829, welcoming the proposal for colonisation.

Rammohun said in that meeting, "I am impressed with the conviction that the greater our intercourse with European gentlemen, the greater will be our improvement in literary, social and political affairs."¹⁰⁶ *The India Gazette*, which was described by the editor of "*John Bull*" in an article in the *Calcutta Quarterly Magazine and Review* as 'ultra-radical in its politics,'¹⁰⁷ advocated colonisation, but like the Manchester economists held that it would certainly lead to the separation of India from England.*

From the *Samachar Darpan* of the 15th October, 1831, we learn that Kalinath Roy, a close friend of Rammohun persuaded a number of persons to sign a petition to

* The opinion of the *India Gazette* reveals that the Anglo-Indian newspapers, a century ago, were not opposed to Indian aspirations. As the article is important for more than one reason, we give below a large extract from it :

"It is not impossible that the unrestricted settlement of Europeans in British India is one of the means that will ultimately lead to the dissolution of the connection between England and this country, or rather to the loss of the dominion which England at present exercises. But this is no reason why their settlement should be prevented or discouraged. If it is, it is a reason also for the prevention and discouragement of every means tending to the same end, such as the general spread of native education, the security of property attained by the pure administration of equal laws, the improvements of the products of the country, the increase of trade and every other means by which knowledge may be diffused, the character of the people raised, and the resources of the country developed. All these will have the inevitable effect of qualifying the people of India for enjoying political and civil liberty and of furnishing them both with the will and the power to claim what they deem to be their rights. The separation of India from Great Britain cannot in the nature of things be prevented. It must come sooner or later; and after appropriating to the mother country all the advantages which colonial possessions can confer during the period of our rule, the true system of governing them should aim to provide that the separation shall be safe, gradual and friendly, whenever it may take place, so as to prevent the possible evils and secure the greatest benefits both to Great Britain and her colonies when the power of the former shall cease."—*India Gazette*, July 20, 1820.

Parliament in favour of colonization. The motive of Rammohun and his party was misunderstood by many in Bengal. A reader of the *Darpan* wrote, "It is not the wish of the great body of the Hindus that the English should come and cultivate the ground and become landlords." He concluded his article by saying that Rammohun "can by no means be considered as a promoter of the general welfare of India."¹⁰⁸ But Rammohun never suggested that the ordinary labourers of England should come and cultivate the land. He did not want European labour, but welcomed only European skill and capital. He asked those Europeans to come and settle in India, who by their superior knowledge and public spirit would elevate the character of the people and bring about the industrial regeneration of India. He hoped that Europeans would introduce better methods of agriculture and effect improvements in the mechanical arts. They would teach the people how to secure political rights and would themselves secure better administration of the country by representing the grievances of India to the authorities in England. It might be objected that "if the population of India were raised to wealth, intelligence and public spirit, by the accession and by the example of numerous respectable European settlers, the mixed community so formed would revolt as the United States of America formerly did against the power of Great Britain, and would ultimately establish independence. In reference to this, however, it must be observed that the Americans were driven to rebellion by misgovernment, otherwise they would not have revolted and separated themselves from England. Canada is a standing proof that an anxiety to effect a separation from the mother country is not the natural wish of a people, even tolerably well-ruled. The mixed community of India, in like manner, so long as they are treated liberally, and governed in an enlightened manner, will feel no disposition to cut off its connection with England, which may be preserved with so much mutual benefit to both countries."¹⁰⁹

Rammohun elaborated this point further in an article written in London on the 14th July, 1832, in course of which he said that the European settlers would introduce

in India. "superior modes of cultivating the soil and improving its produce (in the article of sugar, for example), as has already happened with respect to indigo and improvements in the technical arts and in the agricultural and commercial system generally." He further hoped that "the presence, countenance and support of the European settlers would not only afford to the natives protection against the imposition and oppression of their landlord and other superiors, but also against any abuse of power on the part of those in authority."

He believed that the educated Europeans possessing good character would not oppress Indians in the moffussil areas, nor behave arrogantly with them. He thought that in course of time they would make common cause with Indians and emancipate them from the long-standing bondage of ignorance and superstition. He hoped that like Canada, the mixed community of Indians and Englishmen would feel no disposition to cut off its connection with England so long as it would be treated liberally and governed in an enlightened manner. He knew, however, that it was futile to make a prophecy about the course which History might take in future. He, therefore, made the following observation: "If events should occur to effect a separation (which may arise from many accidental causes, about which it is vain to speculate or make predictions), still a friendly and highly advantageous commercial intercourse may be kept up between the two free and Christian countries, united as they will be by resemblance of language, religion and manners." The last clause is highly significant. Raja Rammohun Roy probably thought in the last year of his life that the colonization of India by Europeans of education and character would lead ultimately to the adoption of English language and the acceptance of Christian religion by the Indians. If this interpretation be correct it would have meant the submergence of the two essential features of Indian nationality in the stream of European civilisation. In that case the claim of Raja Rammohun Roy to be called the father of modern India would become rather weak.

X. The State in relation to Social Activity

As we have stated before, Rammohun Roy was not a believer in the *laissezfaire* policy; he was, on the other hand, inclined to invoke the help of the Government in improving the moral, social, cultural and political condition of India. As he insisted on the moral obligation of the Government should "promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful Sciences."¹¹⁰ He thought it also a duty of the Government to abolish the *Suttee* system, on the ground that the females are as much entitled to protection of life as the males; and that it is the duty of Government to abolish any custom which denies to the female population the right to live.¹¹¹

Rammohun in his tracts against the *Suttee* referred to the old Dharma Shastras and showed that the horrible practice was not sanctioned by religion or the ancient texts.

He was the earliest champion of the rights of women. In 1822 he wrote a book entitled, "Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the ancient rights of females according to Hindoo Law of Inheritance." He pleaded in this book for the abrogation of the more modern doctrine limiting women's rights in favour of the older and more liberal views. By citing texts from ancient law-givers he showed that daughters were entitled to one-fourth part of the portion which a son could inherit. The Hindu Code framed in Independent India is the logical fulfilment of the work commenced by Rammohun.

Rammohun did not hesitate to invoke the aid of the Government in putting a stop to evil social practices. He regretted that the Government had not taken any step to regulate the custom of taking a second wife during the life time of the first. He wrote : "Had a Magistrate or other public officer been authorised by the rulers of the empire to receive applications for his sanction to a second marriage during the life of the first wife, and to grant his consent only on such accusations as the foregoing being substanti-

ated, the above law might have been rendered effectual, and the distress of the female sex in Bengal and the number of suicides would have been necessarily very much reduced."

Rammohun Roy was the first great thinker to suggest a plan for breaking down the barriers of caste system by introducing inter-caste marriage. In this matter, too, he took the help of the permission given in one of the scriptures. In the *Mahanirvana Tantra* the Saiva form of marriage is thus described: "There is no discrimination of age and cast or race in the Saiva marriage. As enjoined by Siva, one should marry a woman who has no husband and who is not 'Sapinda', that is, who is not within the prohibited degree of marriage." Rammohun wanted to make this form of marriage more widely prevalent in Hindu society. Had his plan been acceptable to the people, widow-remarriage, inter-caste and inter-racial marriage would probably have become valid without any fresh legislation.

Rammohun refused to believe that women were inferior to men in understanding and firmness of character. He pointed out: "As you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you can not, therefore, in justice, pronounce on their inferiority." He cited the glorious examples of Lilavati and the wives of Yagnyavalkya.

XI. Forms of Government

In his Persian weekly journal, entitled *Mirat-ool Ukkhbar*, Rammohun wrote an article in April, 1822 on the principles of the English Constitution. He first of all explained the general objects of Government thus: "It is not concealed from rational men, that in order to preserve men's lives and properties from the attacks of their fellow-citizens, and to form friendly relations with neighbouring states, and resist the aggressions of nations who aim at aggrandising themselves on the ruin of others—it is absolutely necessary that every nation should have some kind of government." To conquer other peoples' territories had been a time-honoured custom of the state in ancient and medieval

India. It is remarkable that the first great prophet of modern India eschewed all such ideas. To him defence against the attacks of other states was a legitimate object of the state, but not an aggression on others.

Following the traditional classification of the forms of Government into that by one, a few or many Rammohun said: "There are three species of government that may be deduced from reason: namely, first every individual of a nation may have an actual share in the executive government; or secondly, the reins of government may be committed to a single person; or thirdly, the affairs of the nation may be entrusted to a portion of the higher class or of the lower class of the people" He shows his originality by including in oligarchy the rule by some of the lower class people too. He explains the defects of direct democracy by saying that many persons in a community would be totally ignorant of the rules and principles of government and that many would try to seek their private interest at the sacrifice of general welfare. He did not like to have the rule of a monarch with unlimited power. Here, too, he breaks new ground, because monarchy had been the traditional form of government ever since the time of Manu. Rammohun expresses surprise that people should ever consider absolute monarchy as a suitable form of government and writes: "How is it possible that the lives and properties of hundreds of thousands of the sons of Adam should be made dependent on the will of one man, and ready to be sacrificed to the caprices of a single individual! It is equivalent to bringing upon themselves the nature and condition of brute animals. For the best of men are not supposed to be free from passion, and immoderate desires which very often overcome the dictates of reason; or exempted from those errors and vices which belong to human nature. And, consequently, in the case of an absolute monarchy, from the wrath or mistake of a single individual may proceed the destruction of an extensive country and ruin of great nation." Thus we find Rammohun inimical to every kind of dictatorial form of Government.

He was equally against the rule of a few or some people from amongst the general body. He points out its defects

thus: "The unlimited influence of a great body of men out of a people, in the government of a country, produces discontent and degradation in the rest; and occasions disunion in the nation. Therefore, the third species of government, that is, Aristocracy is calculated to introduce both the evils that may arise from absolute Monarchy and from Democracy."

Having thus shown the defects of all the three categories of Government Rammohun supports the cause of limited or constitutional monarchy in the following words: "As it is absolutely necessary to have some form of Government, the executive power should be committed to a single individual on condition that he do (sic!) not infringe the laws established by the nation; which has been experienced to be the best of all forms of Government, since in this case the subjects have the power of watching the proceedings of the executive Government; which is thus obliged to court the good will of its subjects."

Quoted from the Calcutta Journal, 2nd May, 1822, p 31.

XII. The Ideal of the Raja

Raja Rammohun Roy was one of the earliest champions of the noble ideal of international cooperation. The prayer which he made to the Supreme Being was:

"May God render religion destructive of differences and dislike between man and man, and conducive to the peace and union of mankind."¹¹² In the British Government of India he saw the agency by which the people of Asia might be raised to the level of Europeans in culture and material civilization, without which process of levelling up the splendid ideal of universal brotherhood would always remain an idle dream.

As an apostle of the new creed of universal brotherhood, Rammohun suggested various means by which the union between India and Great Britain might become permanent. He thought that the complete security of property, equality before the eye of law, enjoyment of all the civil rights, appointment to high offices according to merit, and

consultation of public opinion, if allowed by the Government, would make the Indians firmly "attached to the present system of Government, so that it may become consolidated, and maintain itself by the influence of the intelligent and respectable classes of the inhabitants, and by the general good-will of the people, and not any longer stand isolated in the midst of its subjects, supporting itself merely by the exertion of superior force."¹¹³

But the Raja was no doctrinaire. He did not believe in political prophecy. He was perfectly aware of the fact that in spite of all he had said about the means of securing the permanence of British rule in India, a time might come when India might become independent of England. He, however, desired that the separation should be a peaceful one and that India with the help of the Christian Powers of Europe should take up the task of enlightening and civilising the surrounding nations of Asia.'

CHAPTER III

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RADICALS

I. Introduction

While Raja Rammohun Roy was disseminating his fruitful political ideas, western culture and civilisation was being spread through the medium of education, provided in the Hindu College. The Raja had taken a prominent part in the establishment of the Hindu College, and it must have afforded him great satisfaction to find that some of the best students of the Hindu College took up his political programme before his departure from India. Amongst these politically-minded students of the Hindu College were Tarachand Chakravarty, Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay, Rasikkrishna Mullick, Ramgopal Ghosh and Pearychand Mitra. These five brilliant students of the Hindu College were close associates of one another in every sphere of activity. But as the last two personages have acquired great renown as practical politicians we shall discuss their political ideas in the next chapter. In this chapter we shall discuss the political ideas of Tarachand Chakravarty, Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay, Rasikkrishna Mullick and Akshaykumar Dutta. All these thinkers were greatly influenced by the Revolutionary doctrines of 'natural rights' and 'equality'. All of them, excepting the last, were disciples of Derozio and came in direct and intimate contact with Rammohun Roy. Between the sailing of the Raja for England on the 19th of November, 1830, and the return of Dwarkanath Tagore from England in company with George Thompson in January, 1843, they made great efforts to rouse the political consciousness of the people of Bengal.

Students of the Hindu College were highly influenced by the personality and teaching of Henry Vivian Derozio (1809-

1831). Derozio was appointed the fourth teacher of the Hindu College in 1828 and continued to serve that institution up to the 25th of April, 1831. He was an ideal teacher, a brilliant organiser, an enthusiastic journalist, a gifted poet and a philosopher of no mean merit.* He was the assistant editor of the *India Gazette*, which was "ultra-radical in its politics,"¹ editor of the *Calcutta Literary Gazette*, contributor to the *Calcutta Magazine*, *Indian Magazine*, *Bengal Annual*, and the *Kaleidoscope*, and editor of the *East Indian*, the organ of the Anglo-Indian community. Amongst his students were Krishnamohan Banerjee, Rasikkrishna Mullick, Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay, Ramgopal Ghosh, Madhavchandra Mullick, Ramtanu Lahiri, Maheshchandra Ghosh, Sivachandra Deb, Harachandra Ghosh, Radhanath Sikdar, Govindachandra Bysack, and Amritalal Mitra.² The interest taken by Derozio in the training of these young men is vividly expressed in his poem entitled "To the Students of the Hindoo College," in which he wrote

"And how you worship truth's omnipotence,
What joyance rains upon me, when I see
Fame, in the mirror of futurity
Weaving the chaplets you have yet to gain—
And then I feel I have not lived in vain."³

His students too regarded him as one of the greatest creators of Modern Bengal. Ramgopal Ghosh, Tarachand Chakravarty, and Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay, started in 1842 a periodical entitled the *Bengal Spectator*. In it they wrote : "About this time the lamented Henry Derozio by his talents and enthusiasm, by his unwearied exertions in and out of the

*Derozio published a criticism of Kant of which Dr. Mill, the Principal of the Bishop's College, said 'that the objections which Derozio published to the philosophy of Kant, were perfectly original and displayed powers of reasoning and observation which would not disgrace even gifted philosophers.'—*Biography of Henry Derozio* by Thomas Edwards (1884), p. 40.

An essay on Moral Philosophy, translated by H. L. V. Derozio from the French of M. Monperties, was published in the *Calcutta Quarterly Magazine and Review*, 1833, pp. 519 ff. (This Magazine is available in the Uttarpara Library.)

Hindu College, by his course of lectures at Mr. Hare's School, by his regular attendance and exhortations at the weekly meetings of the Academic Institution (*Footnote*.—A debating club over which H.L.V. Derozio presided for several years) and above all by his animating, enlightening and cheerful conversation had wrought a change in the mind of the native youth, which is felt to this day, and which will ever be remembered by those who have benefited by it."⁴

H.L.V. Derozio was a devoted worshipper of liberty in every sphere of life—social, political and religious.⁵ He wrote a poem on "The Greeks at Marathon," on the occasion of the victory of the Greeks over the Turks. He infused patriotism in the heart of his students.*

The students of Derozio drew their inspiration from Bacon, Hume and Tom Paine.⁶ The *Samachar Darpan* relates a story about the eagerness of the Hindu College students for studying Paine's work. An Indian bookseller indented one hundred copies of Paine's *Age of Reason* and advertised them for sale at one rupee per copy. But such was the demand for the book that he sold them for five rupees per copy. "Some one soon after took the trouble to translate some part of Paine's *Age of Reason* into Bengalee, and to publish it in the *Prabhakar*."** These students made diligent study of the

* Pearychand Mitra in his *Life of David Hare* says of Derozio: "He used to impress upon them the sacred duty of thinking for themselves—to be in no way influenced by any of the idols mentioned by Bacon—to live and die for truth—to cultivate all the virtues, shunning vice in every shape. He often read examples from ancient history of the love of justice, patriotism, philanthropy and self-abnegation; and the way in which he set forth the points stirred up the minds of his pupils. Some were impressed with the excellence of justice, some, with the paramount importance of truth, some, with patriotism, some, with philanthropy".

** *Samachar Darpan* quoted in Thomas Edward's *Life of Henry Derozio*.

Dr. Duff also writes : "Here the evil genius of Paine, was again resuscitated. Passages from his 'Age of Reason' were often translated verbatim into Bengalee, and inserted in the native newspapers." — Quoted by S. C. Sanial in his "History of the Press in India," *Calcutta Review*, January 1911, p. 28.

revolutionary philosophy of France and were stirred to the depths by second French Revolution. On the 10th December, 1830, a grand banquet was given by the commanders of the French vessels in Bengal in the Town Hall. Two hundred persons attended it. "So great a favourite is the tri-colour at Calcutta, that we find it stated in the *John Bull* that on Christmas Day, it was hoisted along with the English on the top of Sir David Ochterlony's monument."⁷

Some students of the Hindu College pined in their heart for the outbreak of a revolution, similar to the French Revolution, in India. This sentiment was expressed in the series of essays, on the grievances of India written by the 'Old Hindoo,' 'engaged in heavy commercial duties', and published in the *Bengal Harukaru* of 1843. The *Friend of India* made the following pertinent criticism of this sentiment of the 'Old Hindoo' :—"To assert that if the Natives had enjoyed the blessings of the French Revolution, they would by this time have been treated like men, and assumed a proper position among the nations of the earth, is to write absolute nonsense. Let him read Thiers and Allison before he again ventures to long for a revolution which would have turned the Hoogly into a revolutionary torrent, and established a permanent guillotine in Tank Square."⁸

We get positive proof of the deep patriotic feeling of the first few batches of the Hindu College students from the poems of Kashiprasad Ghosh, who himself had received education in that institution. About 1830 Kashiprasad Ghosh contributed to the *Bengal Annual*, the *Literary Gazette* and the *Calcutta Magazine*, both in verse and prose and was justly appreciated by the public.⁹ He published a poem in the *Indian Gazette*, in which he sang the praise of motherland in the following strain :—

"Land of the Gods and lofty name;

*The Government certainly did not hoist the tri-colour flag. It must have been done by some students of the Hindu College or by some Anglo-Indian enthusiasts. It reminds one of the trick played by the 'Volunteers' in hoisting the Congress flag on Government buildings.

Land of the fair and beauty's spell;
 Land of the bards of mighty fame,
 My native land! for e'er farewell!"¹⁰

This song might be taken as the first cry of patriotic fervour, which was roused in Bengal by the introduction of western culture, and which found its most brilliant expression in the 'Bande Mataram' song of Bankimchandra. Kashiprasad and his friends also dreamt of independence, but they were sagacious enough to recognise that it would take a long time to realise their dream. The following poem entitled "India" published in the evening of his life, shows the spirit which animated the Hindu College students :—

"But woe me! I never shall live to behold,
 That day of thy triumph, when firmly and bold,
 Thou shalt mount on the wings of an eagle on high,
 To the region of knowledge and blest Liberty."¹¹

The Hindu College students made great efforts to propagate the ideas of social and political reform through their associations and periodical publications. Of these associations three occupied a prominent place in the public eye in that period. The first and foremost of them was the Academic Association or Institution,¹² which was established in 1828 under the inspiration of Derozio. Thomas Edwards, the biographer of Derozio, made extensive researches into the literature of that period. He gives the following account of the subjects discussed in the 'Academic Association' :—"Free will, free ordination, fate, faith, the sacredness of truth, the high duty of cultivating virtue, and the meanness of vice, the nobility of patriotism, the attributes of God, and the arguments for and against the existence of the Deity as these have been set forth by Hume on the one side, and Reid, Dugald Stewart and Brown on the other, the hollowness of idolatry and the shams of the priesthood, were subjects which stirred to their very depths the young, fearless, hopeful hearts of the leading Hindoo youths of Calcutta." Secondly, on the 20th February, 1838, Tarinicharan Bandyopadhyay, Ramgopal Ghosh, Ramtanu Lahiri, Tarachand Chakravarty and Rajkrishna De started the "Society for the acquisition of General Knowledge," with the objects of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge,

with special reference to the knowledge about the condition of the country, and of promoting friendly relations between the members. Tarachand Chakravarty became its President, Kalachand Seth and Ramgopal Ghosh, its Vice-Presidents, Ramtanu Lahiri and Pearychand Mitra, its Secretaries.¹³ Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, then a young man of 21 with a great hankering for enlightenment, joined it as a member. Thirdly, Kishorychand Mitra established under the inspiration of Dr. Duff "The Hindu Theophilanthropic Society" early in the fourth decade of the last century.¹⁴

Pandit Shivanath Shastri mentions that Tarachand Chakravarty used to edit a paper entitled *The Quill* about the year 1842-43, and through it the most radical ideas in politics were spread.¹⁵ But I have not been able to find any reference to this paper.

The Parthenon was started on the 15th of February, 1830. It was declared in its first number that it was to be published not less than four times a month, but it was not to be a periodical work, for it had no fixed day of publication. The paper stated its object thus :— "Hindu by birth, yet European by education and its concomitants, they need some organ for the communication of their sentiments, some tablet where they may register their thought."¹⁶ *The Bengal Spectator*, conducted probably by the same set of young men who had started *The Parthenon* gives an idea about the contents of its first number. "The first number (of *The Parthenon*) advocated the cause of colonization and that of female education. It condemned the superstition of the Hindoos and prayed for cheap justice."¹⁷ but the paper disappeared after the publication of its first number, owing to the opposition of the guardians of the youths, who published it.¹⁸

The Hindu College boys also published *The Hindu Pioneer*. It published articles on 'Freedom', 'India under Foreigners' and the like. From the latter article the following quotation is given to show the nature of ideas moving the minds of the Bengali youths in the thirties :—"The Government of India (under the English) is purely aristocratical; the people have no voice in the council of legislature; they have no hand in framing the laws which regulate their civil conduct. We need not expatiate on the monopoly of the State Service, the law's

delay, the insolence of office, the heavy expenses of Government, the retirement from India of all those who acquire wealth, and the enormous taxation to which the country is subjected—evils too well-known in India. The Muhammedans patronised merit wherever it was to be found; the English, like the primitive Hindus, have one caste of men to govern the general body. The violent means by which foreign supremacy has been established, and the entire alienation of the people of the soil from any share in the Government, nay, even from all offices of trust and power, are circumstances which no commercial, no political benefits can authorise or justify."¹⁹

The fourth paper, started by the first batch of the Hindu College boys, was entitled *The Bengal Spectator*. It was started in April, 1842. We shall explain the ideas propagated by it in connection with the discussion of the political thought of Tarachand Chakravarty.

The leaders of the first batch of Hindu College students were not only influenced by the critical philosophy of Derozio and the doctrines of the French Revolution but also by the practical statesmanship of Raja Rammohun Roy. Tarachand Chakravarty, the leader of Young Bengal, was a favourite disciple of the Raja. When the Raja established the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, Tarachand became its first secretary.²⁰ There is an amusing story current about the cordial relation between the Raja and Tarachand. One day at noon, meals had been served to the guests at the house of the Raja. The Raja who was standing before a mirror, took unusually long time to comb his hair, while the guests could not partake of the meal in the absence of the host. At last Tarachand approached the Raja and said "Sir, is your song (How long wilt thou see your face in the mirror pleasantly?) meant for others only?" The Raja became ashamed of his conduct and at once came to the dining hall.²¹

Rasikkrishna Mullick also came in touch with the Raja.²² He was the only Bengali speaker in the condolence meeting of Rammohun Roy held at the Town Hall in 1834. He expressed warm appreciation of the services rendered by the Raja to the cause of the motherland.

Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay retained the appellation of Hindu throughout his life no doubt, but he too was an admirer of the Raja. Rajnarayan Bose informs us in his Autobiography that Dakshinaranjan believed in the Upanishadic monotheism.²³

The political disciples of Rammohun Roy might be divided into two groups— those who championed the cause of the landlords and those who upheld the rights of the Ryots. In the former group were Prasannacoomar Tagore, Dwarkanath Tagore and Ramanath Tagore; while the latter group consisted of Tarachand Chakravarty, Ramgopal Ghosh, Rasikkrishna Mullick, Daskhinaranjan Mukhopadhyay, Pearychand Mitra, all students of the Hindu College, and Akshoykumar Dutta, an indirect disciple of the Raja and the greatest representative of the Philosophical Radicals.

Some students of the Hindu College supported Rammohun Roy's scheme of colonization of India by cultured European settlers,²⁴ while others opposed it vigorously. Amongst the latter we find one writer whose brilliant review of the colonial policy on a comparative basis deserves a permanent place in political literature. The paper was published in the *India Gazette* with an introduction from the editor who informs us that it is the production of an Indian youth, 'whose attainments do high honour to himself, and to the seminary where he was educated.....It was lately read before a Hindoo Literary Society, composed chiefly of native gentlemen, who have been instructed in the language and literature of England, and who endeavour by monthly papers on subjects of general interest, to confirm and extend their previous acquisition.'²⁵

The writer of this paper entitled, "On the Colonization of India," begins with the colonization of Asia Minor by the Greeks. Then he describes the character of the Roman colonies, which were established to keep the conquered people under political subjection. He observes:—"Of three different sorts of colonies, I have already mentioned two, namely, colonies for sending away from the mother country, an unusual increase of population, etc., and those established for keeping any vanquished nation in obedience. The third sort are colonies of Trade. Of this, among the ancients, the

Phoenicians established the greatest number This of course of all sorts of colonies is the least exceptionable, as commerce is generally conducive to the improvement of a country, and this sort of colonies would perhaps be a great blessing to the land in which they are established. This would certainly have been the case with the Phoenician colonies, but they also drove away the original inhabitants into the further part of the country, and established their own people."

Having shown the oppressive character of the colonists in the ancient world, the writer takes up the colonial policy of the modern states. He cites the history of colonization of Ireland by the English and observes that the Irish being regarded as rebels were not given the price of the land, which the English settlers occupied. So far as the colonization of North America and New South Wales is concerned, the writer describes its adverse effect on the native population by quoting an observation of 'an eminent writer' who wrote, "No sooner did the benevolent inhabitants of Europe behold their sad condition, than they immediately go to work to ameliorate and improve it. They introduced among them *rum, gin, brandy* and the other comforts of life, and it is astonishing to read how soon the poor savages learnt to estimate these *blessings*." Then he describes the colonial policy of the Dutch and the Spaniards. Of the Spanish colonies, he remarks that they "afford a far greater example of oppression and cruelty."²⁶ Raja Rammohun Roy must have been embarrassed by the brilliant array of so many historical precedents of the oppression of the native population by the colonists. He did not make any attempt to answer this paper in his statement on the "Colonization of India," except the remark that the people of Calcutta were actually in a better condition than the people of the Mofussil, where there were no European settlers.

We have shown in the first chapter how the powerful pleading of Raja Rammohun Roy led the authorities in England to insert the 87th clause in the Charter Act of 1833. Indians were declared eligible for high posts by it, but for several years to come the clause remained a dead letter. Meanwhile, the students of the Hindu College, inspired by the revolutionary doctrine of the equality of men, made

vigorous attacks on the Government for keeping all responsible posts as monopoly for the British people. It is quite likely that the Government felt the necessity of satisfying these philosophical radicals by opening to the 'English-educated' youths the posts of Deputy Collectors. We have mentioned above, how the rank of the philosophical radicals was thinned by the appointment of Tarakchandra Bose, the principal editor of the *Gyananneshun* in 1835, as Deputy Collector of Hooghly. Similarly, Chandrasekhar Deb (who first suggested to Rammohun Roy the idea of establishing the Brahmo Samaj), Rasikkrishna Mullick, Sibchandra Deb, Gobindachandra Bysack, and Madhabchandra Mullick were appointed Deputy Collectors.²⁷ The appointment of so many of the students of Derozio to Government posts created a void in the party of the Philosophical Radicals. The Act creating the post of Deputy Magistrates was passed on the 5th of August 1843, and many worthy ex-students of the Hindu College were appointed to these posts.

Dwarkanath Tagore came back from England in January, 1843. Having been closely associated for a long time with Raja Rammohun Roy he had imbibed the spirit of practical statesmanship from the Raja. After his return from England, he directed George Thompson to mix with the members of the "Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge." It is quite likely that Dwarkanath and George Thompson won over the Hindu College party in 1843 and turned their minds from discussion of theoretical rights to the agitation for practical reforms.

After 1843 the mantle of the Philosophical Radicals fell upon Akshoykumar Dutta, whose poverty prevented him from acquiring collegiate education and who consequently, could not aspire to a high executive post.

II. Rasik Krishna Mullick (c. 1810-1858)

Rasik Krishna Mullick, born in a Tili Vaishya family of Sinduriapati, Calcutta, was regarded as an oracle of learning and wisdom by his fellow-students of the Hindu College. Pandit Shivanath Shastri describes how Ramtanu Lahiri,

belonging to a high class Brahman family, regarded Rasik as his intellectual *Guru*. Whenever any view of the Young Bengal School contrary to the opinion of Rasik was put before Ramtanu, he used to brush it aside abruptly with the remark, "Do you understand better than Rasik?"²⁸ The high esteem and regard which was shown to Rasik by his high-caste friends was a symptom of the liberalising spirit of the western system of education. Harish Chandra Mukherjee wrote an article on Rasik Krishna on the latter's death. From that article we come to learn that owing to his radical views on social reform, Rasik Krishna was forced to cut off connection with his family. Rasik "began life as a teacher in Mr. Hare's school and closed it with the highest honours which an uncovenanted servant could obtain." He bequeathed five thousand rupees to the District Charitable Society. About his erudition Harish Chandra remarks:—"With a rich and fertile mind, replenished with the sentiments of the best English authors, and disciplined to an admirable training, he was a pride to the old Hindu College."²⁹

Rasik Krishna was the editor of the *Gyananneshun* before 1834, when being appointed a Deputy Collector he had to leave Calcutta. I have not been able to trace any file of the *Gyananneshun*, but I have found some of its articles quoted in the *India Gazette* of 1833. These articles form our only source of information regarding Rasik's political ideas.

Rasik Krishna believed that an intimate connection exists between the condition of society, and form of government. If the government be inefficient, and administration of justice be corrupt, individual subjects would certainly deteriorate in moral virtues. In an article, condemning the Calcutta Police, he wrote :—"That the state of society, as influenced by laws, must be unhinged when the source of justice is corrupted, is nothing new to the political student. That men of wealth and influence will carry off the day, though in an unjust cause, against competitors in a just cause, but less favoured by fortune, is nothing strange to him who observes how far corruption can prevail."³⁰

He maintains that the primary function of government is to administer justice fairly and impartially. But this function can be properly discharged only by such a government as has

thoroughly identified itself with the welfare and interest of the governed. In India, according to him, such was not the case. Raja Rammohun held that the Constitution of India, being controlled by the Court of Directors and Board of Control was one of checks and balances. But Rasik Krishna condemned the government of the Company. He wrote:—"The administration of justice in British India is so much characterised by everything that is opposed to the just principles of government, that we offer no apology to introduce it to the notice of our readers.....A body of merchants has been placed over us as our sovereigns. The question is, how far can they frame laws and administer justice, so as to protect our rights and liberties, consistently with their mercantile spirit? The administration of British India must necessarily be composed of a council of merchants, whose principal aim as such will be to promote their own interests, and to manage their affairs with as little expense as possible. In a word, they will try to make their government subservient to the one ignoble principle of gain."³¹ Then he cites examples of the shortcoming of the Judicial administration in India and hastily concludes that, "every provision that has been made for the distribution of justice, has been dictated by the all-absorbing idea of self-interest." He, therefore, advocates the abolition of the political power of the East India Company—"As long as the present system continues in operation, those evils which we have pointed out, will continue to exist."³²

Like Rammohun, Rasik Krishna too, pleaded for Indianisation of services. Even before the passing of the Charter Act of 1833 Lord Bentinck had declared certain judicial posts open to Indians. But, in practice, the half-educated *Amlas* of the courts were promoted to the post of Sadar Ameens. Rasik Krishna urged the necessity of appointing educated Indians only to government posts.³³ The common objection to the appointment of Indians to high executive and judicial posts at that time was that Indian officers had proved to be corrupt. Rasik Krishna admitted the validity of the charge of corruption, but argued that the Indian officers were corrupt for two reasons. First, they did not get the benefit of education and secondly, their salary was not high enough to place them above want and, therefore, above corruption. He held that "in an extensive country like

India, the natives must have an ample share in the administration of justice—but that justice cannot be pure, as long as the administrators of it are not enlightened by education and rendered independent in their means of support."³⁴

Like all other writers of the period, Rasik Krishna maintained that the Indian people have got a right to receive education through the agency of the State. He also believed that no scheme of improving the machinery of government in India could be successful till the people were educated. "Therefore, it becomes the paramount duty of our Government, if it really have the good of its subjects at heart, to spare no means in its power to facilitate the education of the natives; nor we can be said to be expecting too much, when we request it to appropriate a part of the immense revenue that India yields to the intellectual improvement of her benighted sons."³⁵ As a means of educating the people, Rasik Krishna suggested that Government should distribute freely or at a small price good books which were likely to diffuse knowledge amongst the people. He reiterated his fond belief that the diffusion of knowledge "is the best means of reforming the character of the people."³⁶

Most of the educated people, belonging to the middle classes, have proved themselves worthy of their claim to represent the masses by championing the cause of the down-trodden peasantry against the landlords. Like Raja Rammohun, Rasik Krishna was one of the earliest of these champions of the rights of the Ryots. He wrote: "The permanent settlement in Bengal, though perhaps concocted and set to work with the best motive imaginable, has, in consequence of glaring defects in the judicial system, betrayed an utter neglect of the rights of the humbler classes."³⁷ "The Government limiting its own demand to a certain fixed ratio, the Zamindars are rendered secure against any further encroachment upon their profits; while the poor labourer is still left in a precarious position with regard to his rights, which are wholly dependent upon the arbitrary will of his superior."³⁸

III. Tarachand Chakravarty

(c. 1804-1855)

Tarachand Chakravarty was the undisputed leader of Young Bengal, and by virtue of his intimate relation with

Raja Rammohun Roy, he formed the bridge between the first generation of public-minded men of Bengal and the first batch of the Hindu College students. His position as a leader was acknowledged by the *Englishman* which denominated the younger generation of public men as the 'Chukerverty faction'. He began his career as a teacher ; then, having served in various capacities rose to be the Deputy Registrar of the Sadar Dewani Adalat. Afterwards, he became a Munsif.³⁹ But he resigned that office owing to some unknown reason.⁴⁰ In or before the year 1846 he became the manager of the Burdwan Raj.⁴¹

Tarachand does not seem to have been gifted with oratorical power. George Thompson, as President of the meeting convened to establish the Bengal British India Society on the 20th April, 1843, paid a glowing tribute to the character of Tarachand in the following words: "A man, whose earnest though quiet zeal, whose retiring modesty, whose benevolent feelings, and whose incorruptible integrity entitled him, and had, he believed, won for him the esteem and admiration of all who knew him."⁴² Though Tarachand was a modest man, yet he knew how to be firm and dignified even before persons of authority and reputation. In the famous meeting of the 'Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge,' held on the 8th February, 1843, in the Hindu College Hall, Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay began to read a paper on "The Present State of the East India Company's Criminal Judicature, and Police under the Bengal Presidency." When he had but read half of his essay, Captain D.L. Richardson, Principal of the College, interrupted him by observing that 'he could not permit it (the College Hall) to be converted into a den of treason, and must close the doors against all such things.'

Then Tarachand as President of the Society said: "Captain Richardson! with due respect, I beg to say that I cannot allow you to proceed any longer in this course of conduct towards our Society, and as the President of the Society and on behalf of my friend Babu Dukhin, I must say, that your remarks are anything but becoming. I am bound also to add that I consider your conduct as an insult to the Society, and that if you do not retract what you have said and make due apology, we

shall represent the matter to the Committee of the Hindoo College, and if necessary, to the Government itself. We have obtained the use of this public hall by leave, applied for and received, from the Committee, and not through your personal favour. You are only a visitor on this occasion, and possess no right to interrupt a member of this Society in the utterance of his opinions. I hope that Captain Richardson will see the propriety of offering an apology to my friend, the writer of the essay and to the meeting."⁴³

Tarachand Chakravarty was not simply a political agitator. He was a learned man in the true sense of the word. He translated the Manu Samhita from Sanskrit into English and prepared an Anglo-Bengali Dictionary. As early as 1830 he had imbibed the scientific spirit of historical research. In course of a review of "The Assam Boornnjy or the History of Assam by Huliram Dhaikiyal Phookun, an inhabitant of Geoyahatee in Assam, Bengal era 1236, p. 86" Tarachand made the following observations:—"As publications of a historical nature are seldom known to emanate from the Native Press, a short account of this work may be read with interest by those liberal members of the European community, who sincerely desire and generously encourage the intellectual improvement of the natives. I will, therefore, attempt to give a brief sketch of this history, premising that except in one or two instances our *author has not made any mention of the authorities on which his work is founded, and has, in more than one place, made its authority rest on tradition.*"⁴⁴

"The Bengal Spectator" was published under the nominal editorship of Ramgopal Ghosh, who in a letter to Gobindachandra Bysak, admitted that Krishnamohan Banerjee and Pearychand Mitra would be its regular contributors and Tarachand would not only write in it but also look over the articles of other contributors."⁴⁵ From a careful study of the files of "The Bengal Spectator" I have been convinced that the editorial articles in "The Bengal Spectator" were generally written by Tarachand Chakravarty, and not

* This letter has also been quoted in full by Sj. Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay in his "Deshiya Sambadpatrer Itihas," *Sahitya Parishat Patrika*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 2.

by Ramgopal Ghosh, who himself promised in the letter referred to above that he would be 'an occasional scribbler.' Then again, the editorial articles of the paper reveal to us an intimate knowledge of the life and works of Raja Rammohun, with whom Tarachand alone of all his colleagues, came in direct and friendly contact. In an editorial article, published in 'The Bengal Spectator' in July, 1842, a proposal was made to publish a collection of the works of Rammohun Roy. The writer observes: "Should we be so fortunate as to hear of its adoption, we would gladly submit to them a list of Rammohun Roy's works, *which we have prepared*, and procure for them such of the books as we can obtain from friends, on being requested to do so." I think, the first Secretary to the Brahmo Samaj alone could have taken such a lively interest in the preservation and publication of the Raja's works. Assuming the editorial articles of 'The Bengal Spectator' to have been written by Tarachand, I shall now proceed to give an account of his political ideas which underlie those articles.

Like Raja Rammohun and Dwarkanath Tagore, Tarachand seems to have been dissatisfied with the purely secular education provided in the Hindu College. He pleaded for the introduction of moral education, which "recognizes, above all, the grand deontological maxim of Bentham, what it is a man's duty to do, cannot but be also his interest. It is the Arithmetic of pains and pleasure."⁴⁶ This quotation furnishes an additional proof of the influence of Bentham on the mind of Young Bengal.

Tarachand also maintained that it is the essential function of government to provide education to the subjects. The function of government, according to him, is not only to maintain peace and order but also to lead the citizens to live a better life. He writes: "The dignified authorities to whom the destinies of millions are entrusted ill discharge their *stewardship* so long as they confine their attention to the collection of revenue and the maintenance of an ordinary police and judicature. An enlightened government ought likewise to direct their attention to the dissemination of sound and useful knowledge among the rising generation of their subjects. The general enlightenment of the people is undoubtedly the best guarantee of a good government. While

it checks the commission of crime, it contributes to the preservation of peace, and by promoting the interest of commerce, it strengthens the resources of the Government."⁴⁷ He shows from the statistics, collected by Mr. Adam, that 'even the native system of instruction, however crude, imperfect and desultory, most materially contribute to diminish the number of offences against the laws and to maintain the peace and good order of society.'

According to Tarachand, power has been delegated to government by the people with a view to 'the protection of rights, the prevention of wrongs and the consequent promotion of happiness.'⁴⁸ Such being the origin of government, it is bound 'to consider the education of the people, whom they govern, a part of their duty.'⁴⁹ He maintains that the education which the government should provide must not be merely theoretical in character. France was at that time being transformed into an industrial state; and the Government of Louis Philippe was maintaining the Napoleonic tradition of imparting sound vocational teaching through government institutions. Tarachand thus points out the example of the French Government: "When we remember the benefits which have resulted in France from the Polytechnic School of Paris, and the various other special schools, instituted for the purpose of imparting theoretical and practical instruction in the Mechanical Arts, Agriculture, Architecture, Figure and Landscape Drawing, Navigation, Fortification and in fact all those subjects which 'come to the business and bosom of men,' we cannot but think strongly of the feasibility of our proposal, and of its being calculated to produce the consequences which we have mentioned above."⁵⁰

The Hindu College students were the first to make organised effort to Indianise the Government services. Their interest, too, was directly involved in the movement as they knew it full well that they would be the first to be appointed to high posts, when these would be thrown open to Indians. On the 18th April, 1843, they held a public meeting in the Town Hall to send a Memorial to the Court of Proprietors of the East India Company, praying for the bestowal of more offices on Indians. Tarachand Chakravarty moved the resolution and proposed that the Memorial should be sent

through Mr. John Sullivan, who had championed their cause.⁵¹ In a meeting of the Bengal British Indian Society, held on the 6th July, 1843, a resolution was passed praying to the Government for more extensive employment of Indians.⁵² Tarachand believed "that the maintenance of the Civil Service is calculated to promote a sort of claniship which usually blinds the sense of justice to members of its own fraternity and thus thwarts the efforts of natives to seek redress from the grievances to which they may contribute."

Besides this, the maintenance of the Civil Service as a monopoly of Englishmen "represses the expansion of talent and genius among the different classes of the people and prevents industry, merit and character from being duly remunerated." So he pleaded, "Open it to public competition, and the result will be more salutary and advantageous in every point of view."⁵³

Tarachand Chakravarty as a disciple of Raja Rammohun Roy believed that the grievances which were not redressed by the Government of the East India Company should be laid before the Crown and the Supreme Court, which was the Court of the Crown. When Radhanath Shikdar failed to get redress for his legitimate grievances in the Company's Court, Tarachand advised him "to turn away from the Company's Court to the Supreme Court."⁵⁴

*Radhanath Shikdar (1813-1870) was a student of Derozio. His case, insufficiently and inaccurately described in Pandit Shrivnath Shastri's 'Life of Ramtanu Lahiri' (pp. 146-147), illustrates the mentality of the Hindu College students. Radhanath himself describes the cause of his quarrel with Magistrate Vansittart at Dehradun. "The Bengal Spectator" of September 1, 1843. Radhanath was serving as the Sub-assistant of the Great Trigonometrical Survey in 1843. The coolies of the Survey Department were pressed to forcible service by the servants of the magistrate to carry some goods of the latter. Radhanath did not like this sort of arbitrary treatment towards the coolies; and so he detained the goods of the magistrate. The magistrate then came with a friend of his, a military officer, to the Survey Office. What followed next is described below in Radhanath's own words:—

IV. Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay (1814-1878)

The leading part which Dakshinaranjan played in the public life of Bengal between 1830 and 1857 and in the history of Oudh between 1860 and 1874, has been admirably described by his biographer S. Manmathanath Ghosh. As the biographer has not discussed the political ideas of Dakshinaranjan, we shall try to present his political thoughts from his lectures and essays, published in the "Bengal Harukaru."

Dakshinaranjan was a votary of the doctrine of Equality. He held that God "in his impartial wisdom created all men alike equal to one another, in their birthrights."⁵⁵ According to him in India as well as in other countries, originally there was natural equality and perfect freedom. Subversion of this equality has been the cause of degradation of India. The Brahmana priests were responsible for overthrowing the original equality. They sowed "the seeds of division, alienation, disorder and anarchy, disserving the joint and aggregate interests of the commonwealth into separate and jarring elements, connected with the rivalry of clanship, and the hostility of religious sectarianism, to which our country has been more or less a prey in the course of successive eras, and

"One of these gentlemen called out 'Who has detained my property?' I answered : 'It has been detained by my orders.' He continued, 'What business had you to detain my property?' I replied : 'Just as much as you had in pressing and maltreating my people to convey your baggage ; and I intend to take legal measures'. He rejoined. 'I certainly gave orders to my people to procure coolies, but not to press private servants; and I shall discharge the whole set of my burkundazes'. He now beckoned to Mr. Keelan (an officer of the Survey Department) and asked him to persuade me to give up the property. Mr. Keelan replied, 'But what security shall we have against the recurrence of the proceeding complained of ?' I then observed, 'There is no regulation authorising the forcible seizure and employment of anybody'. Upon which the gentleman in question in a loud and authoritative tone said : 'Do you know who I am ?' At this moment, the other gentleman, who had remained silent, sprang forward and questioned me, 'Who the devil are you ?' I answered, 'A man, and so are you.'

which were first introduced by an ambitious and domineering priesthood, and subsequently upheld and sanctified by ignorance and error, tending to stultify human reason, lest it should remind man of their right to think for themselves, and to strip them of their physical strength, lest they should be able to assert their native dignity?" Raja Rammohun Roy never accused the Brahmanas of such designs. Dakshinaranjan, the disciple of Derozio, here got the better of Dakshinaranjan, the son of a high class Brahmana. Dakshinaranjan's paper was read early in 1843, and the theory he advanced about the cause of the loss of equality and the consequent degradation of India finds acceptance in the 'History of Civilisation in England' by Henry Thomas Buckle, who started writing his book from 1844. It is not unlikely that Dakshinaranjan's essay, which created so great a commotion at that time, was read by Buckle. Bankimchandra in his essays on Equality repeated the theory, advanced by Dakshinaranjan, but it is almost certain that he had not read the latter's paper, lying buried in the old files of the "Harukaru."

The writer who attached so much importance to the theory of equality would certainly chafe at the treatment accorded to respectable Indians by some English officials. Dakshinaranjan observes:—"The native Zamindar, equally with all his countrymen, is well aware that generally, in holding epistolary or personal intercourse with the Company's Covenanted officers, he must either adopt the character of an humble slave, or place himself in the predicament of meeting with gross insult and degradation. This kind of treatment, I need not observe, is, what no man will willingly expose himself to; for it is obviously repugnant to all ordinary feelings of self-respect—feelings by no means foreign to Asiatics or Hindoos."

The influence of the French Revolutionary doctrines on Dakshinaranjan's theory of the origin and object of Government is apparent. He believed in natural rights for the maintenance of which Government was called into existence. He thus stated the origin of Government: "When men first laboured to raise themselves out of a condition of barbarism, it was at once apparent, that certain conventional rules and restrictions were indispensable for giving consistence to a

plan, that confessedly sought the general advantage. The first consideration which arose was, probably, how security and protection of admitted rights between man and man, could be attained and rendered permanent. A code, rude in its outline, but embracing sufficient for the wants of the age, at a period when civilisation was in its infancy, was framed and became understood in its aggregate form, by what we still comprehend as the basis of all that we designate government. These regulations, according to the spirit of the constitution, were characterised by more or less direct influence on the welfare and claims of the people at large. It was presently perceived, that no government could be lasting, not even the most despotic, which did not exercise a large portion of its authority for the guardianship of the helpless and indigent, from the encroachments of the wealthy and powerful. Thus, at the outset of social advancement, it was acknowledged, that all governments were bound, conformably to the tenor of the laws under which they were called into existence, to render equal justice to their subjects."

As regards the object of government he held "that the maxim we have insisted on, *viz.*, that governments are for the good of the many, and not the few, is a catholic one."

He did not attach much importance to the form of government, nor did he want the subversion of the British rule in India. He declared that 'he was no enemy to British rule, nor to any other rule that was upright and impartial.' He would say with Pope:—

"For forms of government let fools contest,
Whate'er is best administered is best."⁵⁶

But at the same time he dilated upon the evils of subjection to foreigners. He complained in his essay, referred to above, that foreigners rule a subject country "for the gratification of their love of gold, seldom, unhappily actuated by the philanthropic desire of promoting the welfare of the native races." He attributed the poverty of India to foreign subjection. "It is undeniable, that if all our forests and mountains were peopled and turned into cities and villages, the internal resources of India are, so vast and abundant, that if the country were governed according to a free and generous

policy, it would be foundcapable of affording the inhabitants the means of plentifully supplying themselves with comforts....."

He complained of the corruption in the judicial department. Being carried away by the force of his own rhetoric he exaggerated the evils of the judicial system and stated: "It could not be denied that in these courts every man had his price, from the peon to the sheristadar.The entire process was one of extortion and corruption in which the weaker and poorer parties invariably went to the wall." In a similar strain, he accused the Police of various charges of omission and commission.

The remedies which he suggested for these evils were two:— Indianization of services and organisation of public opinion. According to him want of knowledge of the country and of the people on the part of high officers was the main cause of the evils he complained of.

'The Friend of India' criticised this speech. In order to give a correct perspective of the period we quote below some lines from this criticism. 'The Friend of India' quoted the view of Dakshinaranjan on public opinion and observed: "It is public opinion and not the fear of legal consequences, which keeps the Bench in England pure. That opinion is wanting here and nothing can supply the absence of it—no penalties, no rewardsThe more they (the educated Bengalees) examine the state of courts, the more will they discover, that the remedy of existing evils lies more in hands of the people, than of the government; that if public opinion in the circle of native society be once enlisted in the side of truth, honesty and justice, the defects of the European functionaries—and they are by no means few—will be little felt. Without this aid, the most strenuous efforts of the most benevolent administration must be comparatively inefficient."⁵⁷

In 1870 Dakshinaranjan drew up a plan for constituting a representative Legislature. He proposed that in each province there should be a Provincial Representative Council, "composed of government nominees and representatives of the people in equal numbers." "These representatives should be appointed quinquennially, from the people of every district

by electors possessing a reasonable property qualification, say at first, the income of Rs. 1,000 per annum. It should be the business of these Councils to check and examine the accounts to be furnished to them by all the departmental heads of the Provincial Governments, and to advise Government as to the proper mode of levying taxes, when the exigencies of the State may absolutely require it. There should also be a Supreme Council, to consist of members, one half of whom should be nominated by government and the other half by these provincial Councils, every provincial Council sending a member."⁵⁸

V. Akshoy Kumar Dutta

(1820-1886)

(1) Introductory

Akshoy Kumar Dutta inherited the spirit of philosophical speculation in the domain of politics from Raja Rammohun Roy, while Tarachand Chakravarty, Chandrasekhar Deb, Debendranath Tagore and other leaders of the first generation of public-spirited men devoted their attention to secure the practical administrative reforms suggested by the Raja. Akshoykumar could not derive the advantage of personal inspiration from the Raja, because when he came to Calcutta at the age of ten years and three months, from his native village Chupi, near Nabadwip, Rammohun had already sailed for England. But in 1839 he came in contact with Maharshi Debāndranath Tagore and became an active member of the Tattvabodhini Sabha. As a member of the Tattvabodhini Sabha and the Brahmo Samaj, he must have acquired a deep knowledge of the philosophical principles of Raja Rammohun Roy. In the evening of his life he penned the greatest eulogy that has ever been written on Rammohun Roy.⁵⁹ He admits there that he derived his love of scientific studies from

* In the Introduction to the second volume of his "Bharatvarshiya Upasak Sampraday" he writes :—"Your (Rammohun's) contemporaries and especially the later generations of educated people have conferred on you the royal crown and have shouted forth your glory. You have vanquished those who had been reigning so long undisputably over the minds of the Hindus. So you are not simply a Raja but the Raja of Rajas".

Rammohun.⁶⁰ Akshoykumar conducted the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* as editor for twelve years from 1843 to 1855. He wrote in it a series of articles, which reveal to us the same spirit of dispassionate inquiry, the same intense love for the country and especially for the poor peasants, and the same conception of the organic nature of society and the potential capacity of Government for making life better and more ethical that mark the writings of Raja Rammohun.⁶¹

Akshoykumar Dutta seems to have been intimately acquainted with the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Locke, Comte, Laplace and Malthus. Not only does he mention their names frequently in course of his essays and discourses, but also quotes their opinions. His theories regarding education and the functions of government were greatly influenced by the views of the Greek philosophers; Locke's writings instilled in his mind the contractual theory of government; and Malthus directed his attention to the problem of checking the natural growth of population in India. Akshoykumar enjoyed the friendship and patronage of Srinath Ghosh, the son-in-law, and Anandakrishna Bose, the grandson of Raja Radhakanta Deb and thus got the opportunity of utilising the splendid library of the Shovabazar Raj family. Anandakrishna Bose was the most learned philosopher and linguist of his age and he had the unique privilege of teaching English to Iswarchandra Vidyasagar and Akshoykumar Dutta. Akshoykumar must have been influenced a good deal by the philosophical outlook of that great man, who unfortunately has not left behind him any legacy of his vast erudition.

The method of investigation followed by Akshoykumar differs fundamentally from that of Raja Rammohun Roy. The Raja drew his conclusions from actual historical events and experiences, while Akshoykumar reasoned from the general to the particular. The Raja's method was inductive, while Akshoykumar's method was deductive. Akshoykumar was not dogmatic indeed, but he held that Nature with all its glories and beauties is the great original scripture, the study of which alone can reveal to man true knowledge and true religion.⁶² From a careful study of Nature man can deduce the laws which regulate the whole universe. In his "Dharmaniti" and the "বাহ্য বস্তুর সহিত মানব প্রকৃতির সম্বন্ধ বিচার" he

shows how Religion, Morality, Laws of Health and the Constitutional and Private Laws might all be derived from the Law of Nature. In order to discover the Law of Nature and to deduct from it all other laws relating to human life and society, the first thing necessary is the spirit of scientific enquiry, which again must emanate from pure rationalism. He writes: "Pure Rationalism is our teacher. Whatever has been discovered by Bhaskara and Aryabhata, Newton and Laplace, is also a part of our scripture."⁶³ He maintains that the man-made civil and constitutional laws should conform to the laws by which God is ruling over the universe.⁶⁴ Unlike the writers of the ecclesiastical school of medieval Europe, Akshoykumar does not think that the Law of Nature has been finally discovered. He admits the possibility of discovery of truth in future and is ready to welcome as a part of Dharma.⁶⁵ So we cannot call Akshoykumar's views dogmatic by any means. What he means to convey is that laws should keep pace with the advance of science, which alone must be the norm for all human laws.

Raja Rammohun Roy was a practical reformer, so he did not think it expedient and wise to neglect the traditional culture of Indian society. He was fond of quoting the adage that one must not depend exclusively on *Shastras* only, but should apply the test of Reason to the Shastric injunctions. Akshoykumar, on the other hand, was a theorist and as such he wanted to see the triumph of pure rationalism in all kinds of social relations. The Raja admitted the possibility of the *Saiva* form of marriage in some cases in modern India. Akshoykumar went farther ahead. He not only advocated widow-remarriage, inter-caste marriage and courtship before marriage and denounced marriage before puberty, but also appealed to the laws of nature to prove that divorce should be sanctioned in case of adultery on the part of either party and even in the case of cruelty and incompatibility of temperament between the partners in marriage.⁶⁶ In another respect Akshoykumar differed from the views held by the Raja. The Raja was friendly to the indigo-planters, because he thought that when a large number of cultured Englishmen would settle in India, they would join hands with the Indians in effecting the amelioration of the social and political condition of India.* But twenty years later Akshoykumar held

that the indigo-planters were one of the two greatest enemies of Ryots in Bengal. These indigo-planters were unfit to be called gentlemen.⁶⁷ It became a serious problem in the fifties of the last century to rescue the Ryots from the iron grip of the planters. In the history of indigo agitation of Bengal the names of Harishchandra Mukherjee, Dinabandhu Mitra, Rev. J. Long, Vishnucharan Biswas and Digambar Biswas are gratefully remembered by the Bengali people, but it was Akshoykumar Dutta, who first of all pleaded for the helpless Ryots through the pages of the 'Tattvabodhini Patrika.'

(2) Society and Individual

Like Aristotle Akshoykumar holds that society is the product of instinct and not of reasoning or contract.⁶⁸ We have shown before how Raja Rammohun Roy steered clear of the revolutionary shibboleths of social contract theory; his disciple Akshoykumar, too, perceived by his keen intellect that man cannot create society by making contractual arrangements. The Scotch Philosopher Adam Ferguson (1723-1818), and the French socialist Fourier too wrote against the contract theory, which was so much in vogue in contemporary Europe. Akshoykumar writes that as it is the nature of bees to live together and work in co-operation with one another, so it is the instinct of man, which impels him to live in association with others. Life in society promotes happiness and prosperity. An isolated bee can, indeed, gather plenty of honey from a garden but it cannot derive that much of efficiency in work and comfort in life which it could have got in the society of other bees. Exactly similar is the case with man. Akshoykumar maintains that as God has implanted in

* In a public meeting held in the Town Hall on the 15th Dec., 1829, Raja Rammohun said, 'I found the natives residing in the neighbourhood of indigo-plantations evidently better clothed and better conditioned than those who lived at a distance from such stations. There may be some partial injury done by the indigo-planters; but on the whole, they have performed more good to the generality of the natives of this country than any other class of European whether in or out of the service.'—*Asiatic Journal*, June, 1830.

man faculties like affection, pity and devotion, man must live in association with others in rural and urban communities to attain a nobler life through the fulfilment of these faculties.

Akshoykumar was a believer in the organismic theory of society, which has played such a prominent part in the history of political thought in the West in the nineteenth century. He writes that as the different parts of a watch are distinct from one another, but at the same time, are related most closely, so every man has got a distinct individuality of his own, and yet is closely related to the whole of human society. Such being the case, society appears to him a beautiful mechanism.⁶⁹

If the individual be only a part of the great organism, called society, the good of the individual must consist in the good of the whole society. Akshoykumar admits with Bentham that selfishness is an inherent characteristic of humanity; but the self-interest of a man can only be advanced when the society has progressed proportionately. God desires that there should be all-round progress for all; so he has implanted in the heart of every man the instinct of self-interest, and has so arranged that the interest of one should depend on the interest of others. If one tries to pursue his own interest at the sacrifice of the large interest of the community, he would meet with nothing but failure. The object of all social codes is to bring about improvement in the condition of the general mass of the people; one of the chief means of realising this object is the pursuit of enlightened self-interest by each individual. So far as this part of the argument is concerned, it sounds like the old politico-economic theory of the *Laissez-faire* school. But nothing can be more distasteful to Akshoykumar than the *Laissez-faire* theory, which he abjured totally in his discussions on the functions of Government. He maintains that along with the love of self-interest, altruism is also a strong feeling in human mind. He finds that in the heart of every man is written distinctly the great Upanisadic adage: "One should look to the good of others as of one's own-self."⁷⁰ If these two principles of self-interest and altruism work together harmoniously, each and every individual of the community may become happy and prosperous. Akshoykumar

was conscious of the fact that men are not generally guided by the principle of enlightened self-interest. Innumerable evils follow from the lack of harmonious blending of self-interest and altruism. As an instance, he shows how people remain callously indifferent when a king plunges headlong into a war of conquest. When the war actually takes place, hundreds of thousands of men of both the parties suffer terribly and lose their lives. Had they been conscious of the close identity between their own individual interest and the interest of the state and had they been able to make the rulers conform to the principles of law and justice, those harmful events would never have taken place.

Having thus established the close identity of interest between society and individual, Akshoykumar shows how the existence of poverty of the masses is detrimental to the interest of the whole society. If no attempt is made to alleviate the misery of the poor, the number of dull and inefficient men would increase, drunkenness would prevail to a larger extent, and the number of ignorant men would also multiply. These men would certainly not benefit the society; they would rather be extremely harmful to it. They would become thieves and robbers and thus bring about insecurity of property. They would not know anything about the laws of health, and even if they knew, would not be able to maintain them because of their poverty. So these poor and ignorant people would become unhealthy and diseased. If the poor break the physical laws and in consequence suffer from contagious diseases, their rich and prosperous neighbours would not remain unaffected. The epidemic would fall equally upon the rich and poor, educated and ignorant, gentle and rude. By such a chain of arguments does Akshoykumar graphically illustrate the organic nature of society. If one member of it is weak or diseased it will affect adversely other members too. He concludes by saying that it is the interest of everyone to promote the interest of others.⁷¹ It is to be noted here that these essays were written in the early years of the fifth decade of the last century, when the *Laissez-faire* theory was triumphant in Europe and that enlightened consciousness of identity of interest between the individual and society, which led to the inauguration of the policy of

state socialism, had not dawned upon statesmen of any country.

Akshoykumar further emphasises the old Hindu doctrine that as soon as a man is born in this world, he is burdened with certain obligations, which he must fulfil. Amongst these binding obligations are the duty to keep one's own health, to educate himself and his children, and to promote the interest of others in such a way as to contribute to the progress of society. If a man wants to be happy in life, he must fulfil these obligations.⁷² Akshoykumar thus employed his vast erudition in western Ethics and Hindu Morals to rouse the spirit of public consciousness, which was so sadly wanting in Bengal in the mid-Victorian era.

(3) *His Views on Government*

Akshoykumar maintains that there is a close inter-relation between the character of society and the form and nature of government. Where government is not efficient and where there is no reign of law, people are bound to depend on one another and live in groups, arranged into clans. In such a country, people claiming descent from one particular *gotra* or clan regard themselves as belonging to one family. This kind of social system prevails amongst the Arabs, Tartars, Turkomans and other similarly situated peoples. He is of the opinion that the joint family system in India might be the product of the peculiar political condition of this country. But where government takes under its wings every individual in the state, where life and property is rendered secure by its efficiency and impartiality, clannish grouping gives way to the individualistic system of social organisation.⁷³

He asserts that government is the representative body of the subjects.⁷⁴ It has got no inherent right to tax the people. The subjects have natural rights over their own life and property. Government is entitled to tax the people only with a view to protecting their life, honour and property. Here he complains that the British Indian Government does not fulfil its obligation to the subjects, as is evidenced by the misery of the Ryots in the Mofussils.⁷⁵

Akshoykumar holds that the interest of the individual is

inextricably mixed up with the interest of the whole community to which one belongs. Then again, government is nothing but the representative of the subjects, constituting the community. So government must extend its sphere of activity to include all those matters, which bring one individual in contact with another, or which are required to be done by the combined efforts of the many. In his opinion, government should not only protect life and property of citizens and seek to advance their material prosperity, but also look to the physical, moral and spiritual improvement of the people. If the people be ignorant of the laws of health, they would fall a prey to diseases and would not be able to fulfil their social obligations. If one man be attacked with disease, others might be contaminated. So the government should take steps to impart knowledge about the laws of health to every citizen. Then again, if the passions of an individual be not brought under proper control of intellect and morality, incalculable harm might be done by him to the moral and intellectual education of the people. If these facilities are not given to the subjects, the debt which government owes to the people would remain unpaid. As the government should maintain peace and order, so should it educate the subjects in all kinds of physical and mental sciences. The object of government ought to be to make the people healthy, happy, educated and prosperous. The best way of fulfilling these objects is to impart a sound education to the people.⁷⁶

As a disciple of Raja Rammohun Roy and the friend of Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Akshoykumar felt no hesitation in invoking the aid of the government in effecting social reforms. As early as 1855 Akshoykumar put forth a strong plea for raising the age of marriage by legislative enactment. He asserts that in ancient India men used to marry at a mature age after completing the course of studies, extending over 36, 24, 18 or 12 years; and women married at an age when they were in a position to select their own husbands. He cites the example of Germany, where the marriageable age of men was fixed at 25 and of women at 18; and where the man was to satisfy the clergy and the magistrate of his capability of maintaining his wife in reasonable ease and comfort. He holds that such a rule should also obtain in our country, otherwise there is absolutely no

prospect of the dawning of an era of prosperity in India. He further adduces physiological and eugenic reasons to prove the harmfulness of early marriage.

He cites the law of Lycurgus, the views of Aristotle and Plato, and the expert opinion of medical men to prove the advisability of marriage after the attainment of maturity. He admits the necessity of varying the age of marriage according to climate and so does not like the fixing of the marriageable age according to the standard of cold countries. But he holds it to be an essential duty of government to fix the minimum age of marriage in a country like India.⁷⁷ He also condemns polygamy in the severest terms possible. In this matter, however, he thinks it disgraceful on the part of the people that the initiative in abolishing this evil practice has been taken by the government instead of by the people themselves. As an exponent of the sociitarian views, Akshoykumar holds it to be a legitimate function of government to regulate family affairs. According to him, in case of adultery or cruelty on the part of either partner, law and social custom should sanction the dissolution of the marriage tie. In advocating the introduction of divorce in the Hindu social system, Akshoykumar did not take into consideration the fact that marriage is regarded as a sacrament and not a contract by the Hindus. By the way, it may be mentioned here that the genesis of the movement which culminated in the passing of the so-called Brahma Marriage Bill should be traced to the publication of the "Dharmaniti".

(4) His Views on Education

Akshoykumar Dutta and Bhudeva Mukhopadhyay were the greatest exponents of the theory of education in the nineteenth century in Bengal. Akshoykumar first served as a teacher of the Tattvabodhini Pathshala at Bansbaria in 1840 A.D. From that time he must have constantly pondered over the problem of educating the masses. In his 'Dharmaniti' we get a complete theory of education, which he thought suitable for the country. The publication of the 'Dharmaniti' almost synchronises with his acceptance of the post of Headmaster of the newly established Calcutta Normal School. Almost all his writings were adopted as text-books in Bengal

and through these books he exerted the most profound influence on Young Bengal.

Akshoykumar attached the greatest importance to education, because he believed that education alone, in the right sense of the term, could remove all the social, political and economic evils Bengal was suffering from. In the Hare Memorial meeting, held at the Faujdari-Balakhana Hall on the 1st June, 1845, he ascribed the re-birth of public spirit in Bengal to the invigorating spirit of western education.*

We have shown above how Akshoykumar proved that the most important function of Government, next to the maintenance of peace and order is the imparting of education. In his 'Dharmaniti' he reiterates the view, and further adds that Government cannot even maintain peace and order efficiently without educating the citizens.⁷⁸ He holds that there should be provision of compulsory education for all children up to the age of fifteen. Children of even the poorest citizens should not be apprenticed to any trade or occupation without this education.⁷⁹ From this it is quite clear that he

* Dr. Mahendralal Sircar's pamphlet "David Hare and the Obligations of the Hindu Community to promote Scientific Education," 1876, Appendix. Akshoykumar's speech is thus reported in it: "Time was, said he, when Hindus were so utterly incapable of appreciating the utility of public works that they would not have subscribed a pice to promote them — when they understood nothing except what related to the glorification of their animal wants. A better day had, however, dawned upon his fatherland. Though the great mass of his countrymen were still destitute of all public spirit, and pre-eminently distinguished by apathy and lukewarmness, yet there was a large and increasing number of educated and intelligent native who were not open to these charges....Many of them were laudably exerting themselves to improve and elevate their country, they had established societies for ameliorating its moral and political condition; they had set on foot the educational institutions for disseminating the blessings of that education which they had themselves received, and which, they knew, was the grand remedial agent for all the evils of their country. Babu Akshoykumar Dutta then dwelt upon the happy effects likely to accrue from the present altered state of things brought about by the labours of that zealous and indefatigable friend of native education, the late David Hare."

wanted the introduction of free and compulsory education in India. This is rather surprising in view of the fact that even in England such a system did not obtain recognition, when Akshoykumar published his 'Dharmaniti' in 1855. As regards the financing of this scheme of free and compulsory education, Akshoykumar asserts that if once the Government be convinced of the supreme importance of it, there would be no dearth of necessary funds.⁸⁰ If the Government check its passion for making war, that is, curtail military expenditure, and if the rich men of this country abstain from the frivolous and harmful pleasures on which they spend money, there would be no lack of funds for imparting education to all.⁸¹ He urges the necessity of public co-operation for achieving this great object. In his short-lived monthly magazine entitled, the 'Vidyadarshan', which he used to edit before his connection with the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* had begun, he bewailed the want of educational establishments in many of the villages. He recommended the Government to raise subscriptions among the people of those villages and believed that the people would gladly and spontaneously contribute for maintaining them. He proposes that these collections should be handed over to the Council of Education, under whose guidance the schools were to be established and maintained.⁸²

He prepared an elaborate scheme for the different stages of education. The most noticeable feature of this scheme is the recommendation for sending children to schools at the age of two. These schools should be of such a type as to make the children believe them to be play-grounds. Here by practical demonstrations the children are to be taught cleanliness and the other elementary laws of health. They are to learn here the plan of living and acting in co-operation with others. Various natural and manufactured articles are to be brought before them and explained. Their latent good qualities are to be evoked by the conversation and example of the teacher. If any child manifests in his behaviour any kind of baseness, he or she should not go unpunished. But the punishment is not to be corporal in character and must not be awarded by the teacher alone. In case of any transgression of duty on the part of any child, the teacher is to convene a Panchayat of all the children and he himself is to act as the president or judge. If the offender is censured by such a body, it will not

only make him ashamed of his own conduct, but also will set a salutary example before others. In this type of school object lessons and arithmetic are to be given greater importance than mere spelling and other purely mechanical things. The teachers of this type of schools are first to learn the science of teaching in Normal Schools and then to engage themselves in shaping and moulding the character of the future citizens.⁸³

The next type of schools are meant for children from the age of six or seven to fourteen or fifteen. The school compound should contain shady trees, bowers and various plants, amidst which some seats are to be provided. In the bye-paths of the groves and bowers, statues of men like Socrates, Bacon, Newton, Franklin, Pascal, Washington, Aryabhatta, Bhaskaracharya, Rammohun and others should be placed. Mottos containing truths of physical science, ethics and religion should be inscribed in wooden slabs and placed at short distance from one another. In the secondary stage lessons on Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Geography, History, Languages and Literature are to be imparted. Pictures, drawings and practical demonstrations are to form the chief means for conveying education. He warns against the general tendency of text-books in history of holding up the lives of war-maniac, cruel enemies of humanity like Caesar, Alexander and Bonaparte as ideal before the students. In his opinion, character of such conquerors should be depicted in such a way as to create an aversion to war, enviousness and greediness in the minds of the readers. He attaches great importance to the physical training of students. He shows how many of the civilised nations have disappeared from the face of the earth for want of physical prowess. He maintains that the lower instincts and physical strength which impel a nation to fight against the invaders, should not be allowed to deteriorate.⁸⁴

In the third type of schools only the selected few should be admitted and they should continue their studies up to the twentieth or twenty-second years of age. For the majority of students, however, Akshoykumar would like to provide technical and vocational education, instead of theoretical university education. In his opinion the Government should establish and maintain schools of technology as well as of agriculture. In the former engineering, ship-building and the

process of manufacturing instruments should be taught. He also appealed to the Government for opening libraries and reading-rooms in every village.⁸⁵

Raja Rammohun Roy was the strongest advocate of the English language as the medium of higher education. Akshoykumar Dutta, on the other hand, put forward a well-reasoned plea on behalf of the vernacular as the medium of the higher, secondary and primary education. He shows how difficult it is to learn the foreign tongue and how the poorer classes cannot afford to spend the time necessary for picking up knowledge of the English language. He argues that the knowledge imparted through the medium of vernacular filters down to the lowest strata of society, but the knowledge imparted in a foreign tongue necessarily remains confined to a few educated men. Moreover, many of those who have learnt through the medium of the English, have begun to hate the language, culture and people of their own country. They have become completely denationalised. The cost of education through the medium of English is four times heavier than the cost of education through the medium of vernacular. It might be objected that there are no good text-books in the Bengali language. But Akshoykumar answers the objection by stating that the best books of writers like Bacon, Locke, Newton, Laplace and Humboldt might be translated and the highest type of education might be imparted in vernacular. But he does not want that the study of the English language and literature should be given up. He also demands that all the transactions of the Government should be carried on in vernacular. In conclusion he reiterates his conviction that the Government alone is able to spread education widely amongst the people; and it is the essential duty of the Government to take up the problem energetically.

(5) *Theory of Punishment*

In 1855 A. D. Akshoykumar Dutta wrote a series of articles on the theory of punishment in the 'Tattvabodhini Patrika'. In the second volume of his "বাহ্য বস্তুর সহিত মানব প্রকৃতির সম্বন্ধ বিচার" he further explained the theory. In his old age, amidst great physical suffering he continued to take a lively interest in the lot of the poor criminals. He studied in 1879

the Administrative Report on the Jails of Bengal for 1871-78 and came to the conclusion that in spite of the severe punishment of crimes, the number of criminals was gradually increasing, as is shown from the fact that in 1871 there were 57,926 prisoners, while in 1878 the number increased to 78,045.⁸⁶

When he first published his articles on the theory of punishment in the 'Tattvabodhini Patrika' the treatment towards the prisoners in Bengal jails was, indeed, very harsh and unscientific. In 1835 Mr. Hutchinson published "The Report on the Medical Management of the Native Jails throughout the territories subject to the Government of Fort William and Agra." In it he cited the example of a jail, where out of 600 prisoners, 166 died in 1829. He described the prisons as "splendid sepulchres." The prisoners had to work outdoor in rain and in the sun from sunrise to four o'clock in the afternoon, with an interval of one hour for cooking their food, for procuring which they were given each two to three pice per day. In 1836 a Committee on Prisons, presided over by Lord Macaulay, came to the conclusion that a jail should be made as much a place of terror as possible, and that labour should be tedious and irksome, that the food supplied should be scantiest in amount, and coarsest in quality that could sustain life, and that as much of pain should be inflicted as could be borne without injury to health or risk to life. In 1843 the 'Bengal Harukaru' condemned the severity of prison discipline in Bengal.* This severity of prison discipline attracted the attention of Akshoykumar. He held that people commit crimes because of their evil passions. If the object of punishment is to diminish the number of crimes and criminals, an enquiry should be carefully made as to the causes which give rise to evil passions in the minds of criminals. But such

* "Unjust severity, in the adjudication of punishments, defeats its own object in two ways. It creates sympathy towards offenders, which is bad, and it tends to render men reckless in the commission of crime." *Harukaru*, January 12, 1843. This line of argument was adopted by all the Bengali writers on Punishment in the nineteenth century.

a procedure has not been adopted in any state of the world. Consequently, even the severest type of punishment has failed to check the ever-increasing number of crimes everywhere in the world. The spirit of revenge has been the mainspring of punishment. The motto of politics has been to exalt the noble-minded and suppress the evil-minded people. But the modern idea of the humanitarian philosophers is that even the latter class should receive protection and moral improvement from the government. Criminals are diseased persons, and as such require medical and moral treatment, and not punishment. But they should be kept confined, lest they carry on their nefarious work and contaminate others by their example. They should be given moral and religious education and should be trained to active habits. Some provision should be made for training them in a profession, which might enable them to earn their livelihood after their release.⁸⁷ It might be mentioned here that Dr. F. J. Mowat, M. D., who was appointed the Inspector-General of Prisons in Lower Bengal in 1855, converted the jails under his care into schools of industry. But he "abandoned as useless and hopeless all attempts at moral reformation", which he regarded "as a delusion."⁸⁸

Akshoykumar Dutta thought capital punishment useless and barbarous. It is useless because it has not been able to prevent murder. A man commits murder under temporary insanity and he does not care for his own life. It has often been seen that a man after having committed murder tries to put an end to his own life. To sentence such persons to death is inhuman. Akshoykumar does not support banishment too, because the exile can mix with bad people, live an idle life and indulge in his evil passions without the salutary fear of social retribution.⁸⁹

(6) *His Views on British Indian Administration*

Akshoykumar published his last book, the second volume of "Bharatbarshiya Upasak Sampraday," forty-six years after the death of Raja Rammohun Roy. During these forty-six years many of the hopes entertained by the Raja regarding the benefits of the British Indian administration had been frustrated. So it was not possible for Akshoykumar to be as

much friendly as the Raja had been towards the Government. Besides this, there was another reason for his dissatisfaction with the Government. He was an idealist; he held it to be the main object of government to promote the moral and material condition of the subjects; but he found the number of criminals steadily increasing, and the peasants sinking into wretchedness and degradation. With undue severity, he criticises the Government and brings against it the charge that under it the people have suffered in health, longevity, strength and religion.⁹⁰ His chief ground of complaint against the British Indian administration was the insecurity of life and property of the poor Ryots. In a series of articles in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* he brought before the educated public the miserable condition of the Ryots in the Mofussils; and blamed the Government for its failure to provide for their safety.⁹¹

Amongst the other specific charges brought by him against the Government were the existence of the Excise Department, high price of all articles, and the loss of health of those who enter schools and colleges. On the face of it, some of these charges are frivolous in character.

In the fifties of the last century he had inculcated the doctrine of all-comprehensive functions of government. He had stressed the duties and obligations of government to the comparative neglect of the obligations of the subject. Unlike Bankimchandra he did not attempt to rouse the community to the sense of its duty to itself. The result of such an utter dependence on government is seen from Akshoykumar's writings in 1879, when he was suffering from acute head troubles. In 1879, he made a pathetic appeal to the Government for removing the abuses he complained of. He appealed to the philanthropy and pity of the English public to make enquiries into the grievances of poor Indians who, in his opinion, had lost even the power of representing their own misery. He writes, "Goethe died with the words 'light, more light,' we too in the dying condition are crying, England, pity, more pity."⁹² He also appealed to the sense of moral obligation of the English people towards the Indians. He asserts that as we by our counsel and intrigue have placed the English in the position of sovereign authority and have gladly tendered to

their care our life and property, it is their duty to promote our interests by all means.

Raja Rammohun would have been satisfied with an equal partnership in the British Empire. Akshoykumar, however, regarded dependence in any form on others as the most terrible suffering. He asserts with great flourish of rhetoric that the Naraka of the Hindus, Hell of the Christians and the Jahannam of the Mussalmans are not as terrible as dependence.

(7) *His Ideal*

We have shown above that Akshoykumar was an idealist. He proved the interrelation between individual and society and preached that the well-being of an individual depends on the well-being of the whole society. The best means of securing the moral, intellectual and material prosperity of a community is to eradicate poverty. He attributes crime, ignorance, disease and vices to poverty. He is grieved to find glaring inequality prevailing among the different members of the community.⁹³ He asserts that the capitalists of every country desire that they should enjoy the best things of the world and others should work as slaves for ministering to their comforts. In a society where the majority of the people are forced to labour day and night for maintaining a minority in luxury, there can be no social progress. God has given intellect and religiosity to all classes of people. But poverty deprives the labouring classes from the opportunity of improving these splendid gifts of God. The rich and wise people should, therefore, try to afford opportunity to the labouring classes to improve their knowledge and piety. The Government, too, should make such laws as would be conducive to the well-being of these classes.⁹⁴

Akshoykumar is of opinion that poverty is due to weakness of mind, early marriage, superstitious rites, intoxication, oppression of landlords, commercial revolution and natural causes like flood, etc.⁹⁵ He also discusses the theory of Malthus and maintains that the increase of population over the means of subsistence is a potent cause of poverty. Hence he advises that those people only should marry who are in a position to maintain their family in comforts.⁹⁶

He suggests several means for removing poverty. He does not like that the wealthy classes should be forcibly deprived of their wealth and reduced to the status of the poor. He wants that the poorer classes should be made richer. This can be done by three means. First, education conducive to the moral and material improvement of the poor, should be imparted freely and compulsorily to all. When properly educated, the poor can effect their own moral, physical, intellectual and material improvement. Secondly, law and custom should be made favourable to the well-being and comfort of the poorer classes. Thirdly, efforts should be made to invent labour-saving machines which will enable men to produce food and clothes sufficient for the requirement of the community. If such machines are employed, every class of people will get enough of leisure, which they would utilise in satisfying their intellectual curiosity and religious instinct.⁹⁷ Akshoykumar thus envisages an industrial state, in which the citizens will produce material things, necessary for existence, within the shortest time possible, and where equitable laws of distribution will leave everyone of them sufficient time to cultivate knowledge and religion.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL DISCIPLES OF RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY

I. Introduction

Raja Rammohun Roy left behind him not only a philosophical school and a religious sect, but also a school of politicians, who tried their level best to carry out the political programme of the first great apostle of modern India. We have shown in the previous chapter that the philosophical radicals too were influenced by the political ideas of the Raja. But while the Philosophical Radicals, drunk deep of the Revolutionary philosophy of France, insisted on the recognition of the 'natural rights', and demanded radical reforms like the abolition of the political power of the East India Company and provision for free and compulsory education, the political disciples of Raja Rammohun Roy confined their attention to the remedy of specific grievances through constitutional agitation. They did not pay as much attention to the discussion of the theoretical questions like the origin, nature and function of government, state and society as the Philosophical Radicals did.

Amongst the disciples of the Raja, the most prominent were Prasannacoomar Tagore, Dwarkanath Tagore, Debendranath Tagore, Ramgopal Ghosh, Pearychand Mitra, Kishorychand Mitra, Gobindachandra Dutta, Girishchandra Ghosh and Harishchandra Mukherjee. During the period between November 1830 (the date of the sailing of the Raja for England) and June 1861 (the date of the death of Harishchandra Mukherjee) the influence of these leaders was paramount in the public life of Bengal. Of these leaders, Debendranath Tagore and Harishchandra Mukherjee alone

accepted the religious reform of the Raja; Gobindachandra Dutta became a Christian; while the rest remained within the fold of the old Hindu religion, though discarding much of the superstitions and prejudices connected with it. The first two of these leaders alone had the privilege of coming in close contact with the Raja but all of them were thoroughly conversant with the political ideas of the Raja. Prasannacoomar, Dwarkanath, Kishorychand and Harishchandra were the professed champions of the rights and privileges of the Zamindars indeed, but they were never prepared to sacrifice the interests of the Ryots at the altar of the supposed rights of the landlords. Like the barons of England in the reign of John, they tried to promote the interests of the Zamindars and at the same time to improve the condition of the Ryots and to look after the general welfare of the country.

I have hinted at the first chapter that along with the Raja, the Serampore missionaries also were making efforts to rouse the political consciousness of the literate classes of Bengal. As early as 1818, they explained the utility and importance of trial by jury and described how the Grand Jury and Petty Jury work in England.¹ In 1827 they advised the Bengal public to send a memorial to England to get the right to sit in the Grand Jury. They exhorted the Bengali people to try to get a share in the work of administration.² In answer to the argument of hostile critics that much corruption would follow if posts of responsibility were given to Indians, they wrote: "This fact does not prove that natives ought for ever to be excluded from responsible situations in the land of their birth."³

Being inspired by the example of Raja Rammohun Roy, Bhabanicharan Bandyopadhyay, who had been associated with the Raja in the publication of the 'Sambad Kaumudi' and who had later on joined the orthodox Hindu party against the Raja, began to discuss specific grievances of the people in his paper, the 'Samachar Chandrika'. A correspondent wrote in his paper: "To detect theft and to prevent the violence of rogues and robbers, the magistrates have appointed in the various Zillahs, police Darogas, Buksees, Moonsiffs, Muhuris, and peons; but these men inflict far greater distress on the

poor inhabitants than either thieves or robbers can do for when they come with great power and pomp, they seldom refrain from theft.”⁴ The political questions which Bhabanicharan discussed in his paper are summarised in one of his articles, in which he wrote: “We have again and again made representations to Government and to the wealth — that revenue might not be levied on rent-free lands, that all inconvenience might be removed respecting a place for burning the corpses of Hindoos in Calcutta, that in the Mofussil the people might be delivered from the oppression of the Daroga, that our countrymen might not become infidels, that instead of abandoning religion, they should devote themselves to its duties, that the costs of Supreme Court might be diminished, that provisions might be easily obtained, that hospitals might be established by Government for the sick poor both in the city and in other places, that by a subscription from wealthy persons funds might be raised for the relief of the blind and the diseased, that the inconvenience of travellers might be removed, and various other things of similar nature.”⁵

The crudeness of these demands is apparent. Neither the Serampore missionaries, nor the anti-Rammohun party made any systematic and organised effort to ameliorate the political and economic condition of the people. What characterised the disciples of the Raja from them was their wide outlook in politics, their enlightened criticism of Government policy and organised efforts to secure political rights. All the disciples of Raja Rammohun were highly educated person; and they were able to enlist sympathy and active co-operation of the steadily increasing number of ‘English-educated’⁶ persons. The “Samachar Darpan” informs us that in 1828, 400 children in the Hindu College, and in other institutions about 1,000 students were receiving English education. Mr. H. H. Wilson states in 1836 that when he left Calcutta, ‘there were about 6,000 youths studying English.’⁷

When Raja Rammohun Roy sailed for England Prasannacoomar Tagore and Dwarkanath Tagore took upon themselves the task of keeping alive the movement for political reform set on foot by the Raja. Prasannacoomar started a paper called the ‘Reformer’. Dr. Alexander Duff

recognised that the paper belonged to the party of the Raja.* In 1833 the paper had a circulation of 400 copies as against 100 copies of the 'Gyananneshun', 373 copies of the 'India Gazette', 175 copies of the 'Calcutta Courier', 208 copies of the 'Bengal Chronicle', 242 copies of the 'Bengal Herald', 200 copies of the 'Indian Register', 200 copies of the 'Enquirer', and 934 copies of the 'Bengal Harukaru'.** From the above statement, it would appear that the 'Reformer' was one of the most influential journals of the time. Dwarkanath Tagore, on the other hand, had got from Rammohun the idea of promoting Indian interests through the agency of the newspapers conducted by Englishmen in India. So, instead of starting an independent paper, he purchased large shares of the influential Anglo-Indian papers. He purchased the 'India Gazette' for 3,400 rupees and joined it with the 'Bengal Chronicle'.⁸ Subsequently, the 'India Gazette' was amalgamated with the 'Bengal Harukaru'. Kishorichand Mitra states that Dwarkanath purchased a considerable share of the 'Bengal Harukaru' with the object of counteracting

* Dr. Duff wrote: "The first established of these was the 'Reformer', published exclusively in the English language. It excited, on its first appearance, an undoubted curiosity, chiefly from the circumstances of its being the first English newspaper ever conducted by natives. It represented the sentiments of a party not large in number but potent in rank and wealth, the party of the celebrated Raja Rammohun Roy." Quoted in Mr. S. C. Sanial's article on the 'History of the Press in India,' 'Calcutta Review,' January, 1911, p. 28.

** 'Calcutta Quarterly Magazine and Review', 1833; Article on 'the Calcutta Press' by the editor of the 'John Bull,' pp. 405 ff. The writer gives the following account of the 'Reformer': "An arena of discussion on all questions connected with the local politics, literature, religion, metaphysics, jurisprudence and political economy. This paper circulates 400 copies, 100 of which are subscribed for the Europeans, and is thought to be very instrumental in promoting a taste for English composition amongst the natives. The editor, an intelligent native gentleman. Writes very well himself, but he does not take the trouble to correct the contribution of his countrymen. It is perfectly independent of any particular religious bias." The circulation of 'Samachar Darpan', the most influential of vernacular papers, was 400 in 1836. —'Friend of India,' July 7, 1836.

"the savage and unscrupulous attacks of the 'John Bull' upon the natives".⁹

Prasannacoomar and Dwarkanath were not content with the advocacy of Indian cause through the press alone. They also organised political associations in India. While they and William Adam were carrying on agitations in India and England, another associate of Raja Rammohun Roy was delivering lectures in Calcutta on the rights and duties of citizenship. This associate was not a Hindu College student, but a Pandit of the old school. He was Pandit Ramchandra Vidyabagish, who kept alive the Brahmo Samaj from 1830 to 1843. Prasannacoomar engaged him to deliver a course of lectures on 'Niti Darshan' or ethical principles to the students of the Hindu College.† Out of a course of 24 lectures, the following were devoted to Political Philosophy :— No. 10 : Patriotism; No. 19: Peace and War; No. 20 : On the origin and the necessity of Government and the principal forms thereof now prevalent in the world; No. 21 : On the necessity of obedience to the lawful authority and the liberty of the subject; No. 22 : On the origin and the institution of Law; No. 23 : On International Law.

II. *Prasannacoomar Tagore*

(1801-1868)

Prasannacoomar Tagore was a strong supporter of Raja Rammohun Roy in all kinds of social, educational and political activities. He did not, however, subscribe to the religious opinions of the Raja.* The quotations from the

† Sj. Satischandra Chakravarty's edition of the Autobiography of Debendranath. Appendix XV, p. 343 Sj. Chakravarty mentions that the lectures of Vidyabagish were published under the title 'Nitidarshan'. I have not yet been able to trace that book. Sj. Chakravarty informs me that he too has never seen the book.

* The *India Gazette* of October 19, 1831, informs us that Prasannacoomar performed the Durga Puja ceremony. Derozio in his "East Indian" attacked him severely for this. A correspondent in the *India Gazette* supported Prasannacoomar on the ground that he did not perform the Puja out of religious conviction, but out of practical necessity, the ancestral property having been bequeathed

'Reformer', which I have been able to collect together, reveal Prasannacoomar as a constructive statesman, who accepted Raja Rammohun as his political *Guru*. But Dr. Duff accuses Prasannacoomar of holding radical and extremist views in the early days of the publication of the 'Reformer'. He observes: "In politics, the 'Reformer', at first assumed a tone of rancorous and indiscriminating violence towards the British Government; out-doing the wildest flights to which ultraradicalism has ever soared in these lands (Great Britain). A non-descript species of native oligarchy and republicanism combined, was the panacea proposed for remedying all the ills of India. It was thus unskilful and injudicious enough to attempt the erection of towns and palaces out of the surrounding rubbish, by beginning at the top of the intended edifices — forcing a poor, blinded, ignorant, priest-ridden race, to listen to weekly orations on their abstract rights and privileges, as members of a great social polity before they were capacitated to comprehend one jot or tittle of their individual rights as men".¹⁰ But as early as July, 1831, we find in Prasannacoomar as much admiration for the British Government in India as was evinced by Rammohun. Prasannacoomar in his article on the 'Political faith of educated Hindoos' observes: "If we were to be asked, what Government we would prefer, English or any other, we would, one and all reply, English by all means, any, even in preference to a Hindu Government. But it is a truism, which need not be urged, that no human institution is perfect, and they all admit of improvement. We accordingly take the liberty of pointing out the defects which we perceive in the existing institutions of the country, with a sincere desire for their improvement."¹¹ Does this view sound like the thunderings of an ultra-radical? In 1837 the 'Reformer' published a long article "On the insecurity for the British Indian Empire", pointed out in it the haughty conduct of Englishmen towards Indians, and expressed that under Akbar Shah or Hyder Ali such a behaviour on the part of the

to him on condition of performing the Puja. Derozio made enquiries about this condition and wrote that no such condition was attached to the property.

rulers towards the ruled was unknown. It dwelt upon the exclusion of Indians from responsible posts and observed: "Will these people care whether the English, French or Russians rule over them?"¹² The statement quoted above does not really mean that the Bengalee people were anxious to subvert the British Government in India. Prasannacoomar was fully aware of the ignorance and callousness of his countrymen. He only meant to say that the exclusion of Indians from a share, however small, in the government of the country, would produce discontent among the small group of politically-minded people. He observed in 1833: "Not that we mean to insinuate there is any danger of rebellion. The natives are not yet fit for such effectual check to the grasping hand of monopoly — the mass of the people will not even know of the oppression to which they are frequently subjected: they feel the full effects, it is true, of all that is done to prevent their advancement, but they are too ignorant to trace these effects to the proper cause."¹³

Like Raja Rammohun, Prasannacoomar urges the necessity of entrusting responsible posts to Indians. He points out that in the early days of British Indian administration Raja Rajballabh was "the senior member of the Revenue Board on a salary of rupees 5,000, and had according to the rules of that period a seat in the Council."¹⁴

Like the Raja again, Prasannacoomar exercised his pen for securing better administration of justice in India. The 'Reformer' voiced the grievances of the people of the Mofussil and complained of irregularities in judicial administration in the Mofussil courts.¹⁵ Prasannacoomar thought that the best means of securing impartial and fair justice was to employ Indians as jurors. He showed from the *Mitakshara* that the jury system was not unknown in India. He quoted the following passage from the *Mitakshara*: "Members of a family, those of a profession, the inhabitants of a town, judges appointed by the King, and the King himself, are qualified to decide on all matters of difference, and the authority of one is above that of another, according to the progressive order in which they are arranged." He makes the following observations on the passage: "They (the commentators) say, according to this text, whenever any dispute arose, which

concerned only the family affairs of the parties, it was usual to appeal to a competent number of members belonging to that family, and the dispute was referred to them for decision; when the dispute concerned a trade or profession, the respectable members of that trade or profession were called on to decide; and when the dispute was of such a nature as that it could not properly be brought under either of these heads, it was referred to the decision of a body of respectable inhabitants of the place, which was the scene of that occurrence. The aggrieved party, as well as those who were not satisfied with the decision of these tribunals, had the privilege of appealing to the judges appointed by the King, or to the King himself.* He argues that originally the trade guild and the village Panchayat had the power to decide cases finally, but owing to the growth of despotism, which was helped on by the priestly class, the people lost that right and had to refer to the King for final decision in certain cases. He remarks: "Superstition, which was the prolific source of despotism and the stronghold of priestcraft, contributed not a little to deprive the people of their just rights, by adding undue authority to the privileges of the crown. The ministers of religion, who were also the legislators, easily discovered the weakness of a people, who, from ignorance, were credulous of the most absurd doctrines, which were offered for their belief, and to place their power on a firm basis, they connived with the rulers of the land to increase their power by sacrificing the rights of the people, which were in a manner entrusted to their charge, by the credulous mob. Thus the appeal from the verdict of the Panchayat was made to rest with the king".¹⁶

Prasannacoomar was one of the signatories to the petitions sent to the Supreme Court and to the king in Council praying for the abolition of restrictions on the Press. In the Free Press Dinner, given in honour of Sir Charles Metcalfe on the 9th

* It is to be noted that nearly a century before the researches of Mr. K. P. Jayaswal, Drs. R. C. Majumdar, Radhakumud Mukherjee and U.N. Ghoshal, who have all attached great importance to the passage quoted above, Prasannacoomar explained its constitutional significance.

February, 1838, he explained the necessity of allowing freedom of the Press in the following words: "Some have thought fit to surmise, that by the diffusion of knowledge among the people of India, the connection between her and England will ultimately be dissolved. These people, I say, are quite wrong, because if gratitude be a feeling inherent in human nature, and if education and enlightenment tend to cherish that feeling, how can it be asserted, if India owe to England, her mother country, a heavy debt of gratitude for her enlightenment, that she will prove an ungrateful daughter? No; on the contrary, education, and allowing to the people of India the exercise of the political privileges regarding the English, as at home, is the surest way of establishing British rule on the firmest basis."¹⁷

III. Dwarkanath Tagore

(1794-1846)

No other Indian held such an eminent position in the public life of Bengal as did Dwarkanath Tagore in the period between 1830 and 1846. Kishorichand Mitra, a junior contemporary of Dwarkanath, has dealt with the eminent services rendered by this illustrious co-adjutor of Raja Rammohun Roy.¹⁸ Dwarkanath was the first Indian to be appointed Honorary Magistrate.¹⁹ When he visited England, Queen Victoria is said to have desired to confer Knighthood on him but he declined to accept this honour.²⁰ He was invited at the Ninth Anniversary Meeting of the Abergaveany Cymreigyddion Society in Wales, and though he could not be present, an address, written on a fine piece of vellum in the original Welsh character was presented to him. He was addressed in it as the "Most Illustrious Chieftain Dwarkanath."²²

It was the great object of Dwarkanath's life to rouse the Political consciousness of the people of Bengal. In a meeting held on the 18th June, 1836, he said: "The majority of my countrymen say, 'If I have lost one eye, let me take care of the other' and thus they keep themselves back from public meetings, and are tardy in the assertion of their rights." He believed that the spread of English education would cure his

countrymen of indifference towards public life. He observed in the same meeting: "Let the Hindu College go on, as it has gone on, for three or four years more, and you will have a meeting like this attended by four times the number of Natives."²²

Dwarkanath was fully conscious of the loss of political rights under the British Government. He said in a meeting on the 18th June, 1836, "They have taken all which the Natives possessed; their lives, liberty, property, and all were held at the mercy of Government."²³ In spite of the consciousness of this loss. Dwarkanath entertained the greatest admiration for the British Government in India. While in England he declared before the Court of Directors: "I have worked in my humble sphere under a firm conviction that the happiness of India is best secured by her connection with your own great and glorious country, and that the more the people of that vast empire were enlightened, the more sensible they would become of the invincible power of the protecting state, of the excellence of a government, whose pure and benevolent intentions, whose noble solicitude for the welfare and improvement of millions committed by Providence to its charge, may challenge the admiration of the wide world."²⁴ This admiration for British rule in India proceeded from the belief that education would be promoted, and freedom of opinion conceded by the Government in this country. This was exactly the view of Raja Rammohun, who again and again said that the loss of political rights could be compensated only by the recognition of civil rights by the British Government in India.

Dwarkanath lent his powerful support to Rammohun's scheme of colonization of India by cultured and wealthy citizens of Europe. In a meeting held in favour of colonization at the Town Hall on the 15th December, 1829, Dwarkanath argued that colonization would promote agriculture, improve the condition of Ryots and make the Zamindars wealthy and prosperous. From his personal experience he said: "I have found the cultivation of indigo, and residence of Europeans have considerably benefitted the country and the community at large."¹⁷

After the death of Raja Rammohun, Dwarkanath made attempts to secure those benefits for the country, for which the Raja had fought so valiantly. In a meeting held on the 8th July, 1835, he advocated the introduction of trial by jury in the Supreme Court and pleaded for extending the jury system to the Mofussil Courts.¹⁸ Raja Rammohun's efforts to secure freedom of the Press had failed. But Dwarkanath did not relax his attempts to secure it. On the 5th January, 1835, a public meeting was called for the repeal of the Press Regulations and for the removal of restrictions upon public meetings. In it he said: "In rising to second the resolution, I am doing only that which I did ten years ago. When this Regulation was first promulgated, I with three of my relations, and my lamented friend, the late Rammohun Roy, were the only persons who petitioned the Supreme Court against it.....None of them (Bengalees) could I prevail upon to join me, and I believe, it was thought I should be hanged the next day for my boldness."¹⁹ When his efforts were crowned with success during the administration of Sir Charles Metcalfe, he wrote: "It (freedom of the Press) strengthens their (Government's) own hands and ears and eyes, in ruling this vast region, and it is also a guarantee to the people that their rulers mean to govern with justice, since they are not afraid to let their subjects judge of their acts."²⁰

Dwarkanath exerted himself to the best of his capacity for securing that elementary right of citizens—the protection of life and property. He drew in his Evidence before the Committee of Police Reform a vivid picture of the state of insecurity prevailing in the Mofussil. He said: "I think that, from the Darogah to the lowest peon, the whole of them are a corrupt set of people; a single case could not be got out of their hands without paying money; the wealthy always get advantage over the poor. In quarrels between the Zamindars and Indigo Planters large sums are expended to bribe these people. When any report is called for by the Magistrate from the Darogahs, even in a true case, that report could not be obtained without paying a large sum of money; and should the case be between two rich parties, the richest, or he who pays the highest would get the report in his favour. If a Jamadar or peon is sent to a village for inquiry, there is immediately a tax levied by them from all the Ryots of the

village through the Gomastha of the Zamindar, and this mode of extortion has so long prevailed as almost to give it the character of a just demand; so much so, that not a single Ryot would ever make an objection to pay it; indeed they look upon it as an authorized tax. If a dacoity takes place in any neighbourhood, the Darogah and his people will go about the villages and indiscriminately seize the inhabitants, innocent or culpable; and it often happens that persons so taken, although of the most suspicious character, in the particular transaction, are released on some money inducement being given to the officers. ²¹

To remedy this sad state of the Mofussil Police, Dwarkanath suggested the appointment of Deputy Magistrates. In his evidence before the same committee he said: "To remedy the state of things complained of, Deputy Magistrates should be appointed, either Native, East Indian or European,²² and if selected from the two latter denominations, they should be conversant with the Native language, so as not to be dependent on the interpretations of the other people, but understand directly the Ryots, and when they receive any petition in the vernacular language that they may read it themselves. They should be taken from the respectable class of people, and not selected merely to increase the salary of those who are at present employed, whether Darogahs, Seristadars, or others, amongst whom a good man might perhaps here and there be found, but generally speaking they are good for nothing. The appointment of these new officers should either be made by the Government or the Court of Sudder Dewanny Adawlut. They should be stationed in the interior, and their powers in criminal cases should correspond with those of Moonsiffs, and they should be allowed to exercise jurisdiction over the Thanadars. The present Darogahs should be abolished, and the Thannas remodelled on the plan of those in Calcutta. The Jamadar, or his deputy should personally report as circumstances render necessary, to the Deputy Magistrates and if it comes to his knowledge that a quarrel or dispute is likely to take place, he should immediately give information to the Deputy Magistrate."²³ Dwarkanath's suggestion was accepted with certain modifications by the Government in 1843. He thus became instrumental in securing for the educated Indians a class of responsible posts.

Raja Rammohun did not demand the representation of India in the British Parliament. But Dwarkanath suggested that each Presidency should be allowed to send two representatives to Parliament.²⁴

IV. Maharshi Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905)

The biographers of Maharshi Debendranath have not laid adequate stress on the fact that Debendranath as the son of Dwarkanath was sure to occupy a large place in the public and political life of Bengal. The Maharshi himself is partly responsible for this omission; his autobiography being a record of his spiritual development, he has not thought it necessary to relate the part he played in the political history of Bengal between 1843 and 1853. In his autobiography he has remained silent over his activities for several years from May 1851. S. Satishchandra Chakravarty, the ablest of the editors of his autobiography, has noticed this silence and has attempted to give an account of the Maharshi's activities during these years in the 49th Appendix of his book. But so far as the Maharshi's political activities are concerned, he has simply observed that Debendranath became the first secretary to the British Indian Association. Such is also the case with Ajitkumar Chakravarty's voluminous biography of the Maharshi.

We have mentioned before that Debendranath was a member of the 'Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge'. S. Satishchandra Chakravarty supposes that in 1843 when Dwarkanath returned from England and Debendranath was busy with the *Tattvabodhini Pathshala* (established on the 30th April, 1843) and *Tattvabodhini Patrika* (founded in August, 1843), there arose some estrangement between father and son, owing to the indifference of the latter to secular activities.²⁵ The year 1843 is a turning point indeed in the spiritual life of the Maharshi, who publicly accepted the Brahmo faith on the 21st December, 1843. But early in the year, on April 18, 1843, we find him taking an active part in political agitations. On April 18, 1843, a public meeting was held at the Town Hall

for securing Indianization of services. In this meeting Debendranath was the mover of the first Resolution. He proposed thanks to John Sullivan for having moved in the Parliament for the admission of Indians to all offices.²⁶ It is to be noted here that two days after this meeting the British India Society was founded.

Then on the 31st of October, 1851, Debendranath became the first secretary to the British Indian Association. From that time he came into the limelight of the public life in Bengal. On the 11th December, 1851, he took a prominent part in the establishment of the Bethune Society. "In pursuance of a circular issued by Dr. Mouat, Secretary of the College and of the Government Council of Education, a meeting of native gentlemen was held in the Theatre of the Medical College on Thursday, 11th December, 1851..... After a lengthened conversation, in which Babu Debendranath Tagore, Dr. Chukerbutty, Dr. Sprenger, Rev. J. Long and others took part, it was unanimously resolved that "A Society be established for the consideration and discussion of questions connected with Literature and Science." Along with Debendranath, Dr. J. F. Mouat, Rev. J. Long, Dr. Sprenger, L. Chat, Dr. Chukerbutty, Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Ramgopal Ghosh, Radhanath Shikdar, Ramchandra Mitra, Kailashchandra Bose, Jnanendramohan Tagore, Pearychand Mitra, and Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyay became members of the Bethune Society.²⁷ It is to be noted in this connection that the Society arranged for lectures and discussions on subjects connected with political Science, though it did not agitate for political reforms. Under its auspices Mahendralal Shome delivered a lecture on "The comparative merits of the Laws of Primogeniture and equal succession considered with reference to the principles of natural justice and political economy and their influence on the morals of a nation"; Mr. Kirkpatrick on "Trial by jury"; Charles Piffered on "Theory of Punishment," and Joseph Goodeve on "Laws of England" and Rev. J. Long chalked out a big programme for Sociological investigations in Bengal. Rajnarayan Bose in his autobiography mentions that Debendranath was averse to meeting Europeans. Had that been the case, he would not have taken a leading part in the foundation of the Bethune Society.

I have not been able to find as yet the exact date of the resignation of Debendranath from the secretaryship of the British Indian Association. He not only filled this office with great ability during the first year, but was also elected Secretary for the year 1853. But the annual report of 1853, presented on the 13th January, 1854, was signed by Iswarchandra Singh as Secretary. Bholanath Chandra collected with the help of Raj Jogeshur Mitter and the members of the family of Digambar Mitra all the papers written by the latter. Bholanath Chandra does not claim the authorship of the reports of the first year of the British Indian Association for Digambar Mitra, who was the Assistant Secretary of the Association, while Debendranath was the Secretary. So we may assert that those reports, if not actually written by Debendranath, were the fruits of his own labour. From these we gather a few of the political ideas of the Maharshi.

The son of Dwarkanath took up his father's plea for affording protection to the poor villagers through the instrumentality of the Government. Debendranath reminded the Government of its primary duty of affording protection to the citizens in the following words:—

"The rural population, whose industry most largely contributes to the resources of the State, were left not only without adequate protection, but without many of the advantages which are enjoyed by other classes. The means devised in the draft of an Act for affording protection to them, contemplated a control over the watchmen employed by villagers at their own expense, but involved no outlay from the public resources. But as it happened that a considerable portion of the revenue was raised with avowed object of providing a sufficient Police force for the country the committee were bound to bring to the notice of the Government the wrong which would be done, were the proposed measure to be carried into effect, and the obligation which had long been incurred but not fulfilled, of providing a sufficient force for the protection of the people."²⁸

Debendranath also felt keenly the injustice of the Salt tax. The Committee of the Association, indeed, protested only

against the heavy fine which was imposed on the Zamindars for any infraction of the monopoly of salt within their Zamindary. But in penning the memorial to the Government Debendranath sounded a note of sympathy for the poor people in the following words:—"Half a dozen persons may be joint-proprietors of a small *talook*, or of a parcel of rent-free land, having a dozen or half a dozen Ryots, hardly yielding a gross profit of 100 rupees a year, or being of a value exceeding 500 rupees, and each of them may be fined in the aggregate market-value of his property, if any of the Ryots be too poor to pay in any week for his daily salt, and, in order to avoid the difficulty be foolish enough to boil a little of the saline earth, or dig a few holes near the sea shore and steep straw therein to burn for its ashes, or collect together a heap of earth."²⁹

In order to appreciate correctly the importance of the political activities of Maharshi Debendranath, it should be remembered that the years between 1851 and 1853 was the most important period in the annals of the British Indian Association. It was during these years that a cleavage arose between the European settlers in Bengal and the Bengali community, that agitation was made for representation of Indians in the Legislative Council, that the opening of civil and medical services to Indians was demanded, and a large subsidy was given to the 'Indian Reform Society' and to the so-called agent of the Association in London to carry on propaganda on behalf of India in England. The few facts gleaned above regarding Maharshi Debendranath are not important indeed in the history of political thought of Bengal, but they give, I believe, a more correct interpretation of the life of one of the creators of modern Bengal, who in his early years had the good fortune of coming in contact with Raja Rammohun, the greatest of the social, political and religious reformers of the age.

V. Ramgopal Ghosh
(1815-1868)

Ramgopal Ghosh was one of the most prominent leaders of Bengal in the period between 1835 and 1868. Like

Dwarkanath, he, too, was busily engaged in commercial affairs and had very little time to devote to political speculations. In practical politics he tried to carry out the reforms suggested by Raja Rammohun Roy. Like the Raja, he too smarted under a sense of the disabilities imposed on able Indians by the foreign Government but that feeling did not blind him to the obvious benefits of the British rule in India. In the inaugural meeting of the British India Society in 1843, he said that the Mohammedans had been more liberal in the distribution of higher offices than the British. But at the same time he declared that, 'he desired nothing more sincerely than the perpetuity of the British sway in this country.' He further said that, 'while he was a friend to every wholesome reformation, he was the ardent and attached friend of British Supremacy, and should bitterly deprecate any event, which should weaken the ties, which bound India to the people and Government of Great Britain.'³⁰ Again, in the Harish Memorial Meeting, held in 1861, he said:—"In a country like this, and under a government such as they had, it was impossible to expect native talent and native genius to be appreciated and promoted. They were not living in a free country, or under a representative government. He did not find fault with the existing rule; perhaps it was the best they could have under present circumstances; but with an exclusive civil service and no outlet for career there was no stimulus to exertion."³¹ This is simply an echo of Raja Rammohun's opinion.

He tried his utmost to secure the admission of Indians to the Civil Service. In a large meeting of Indians, held on the 29th July, 1853, he urged the necessity of throwing open Civil Service without any reservation to Indians.³²

He also believed that in 1853 time had come when there were many able Indians to represent the people of India in the Legislative Council. He made a very moderate demand for the inclusion of some Indians in the Indian Legislature. He said in the meeting, referred to above: "I do not pretend to say, nor have ever pretended to say, that the natives should have a preponderance of votes in that Council.... And yet the ministerial scheme provides in effect that no native of India shall be a member of the new Legislative Council."³³

In his pamphlet on 'A few Remarks on certain Draft Acts, commonly called Black Acts,' he made a strong plea for securing equality of British-born subjects with Indians before the eye of Law. He also advocated the extension of the jury system on the ground that, "such a system would teach them the nature and responsibility of public duties, it would gradually befit them to take a greater share in the administration of justice." But he thought that in jury trial, unanimity of verdict should not be required of jurors. He wrote : "But whatever these suggestions may be, save us from that glaring absurdity of the English jury system, which makes it necessary that twelve men shall always be of one mind in every question submitted to their consideration."³⁴

One particular idea of Ramgopal Ghosh is of great interest to the present generation of the Indian public. He was of opinion that students should not take active part in politics. In moving the fifth resolution in the inaugural meeting of the British India Society, he said that there were two reasons for the exclusion of students from membership of the Society. "The first was the necessity which was laid upon them as pupils, to devote all their time to the acquisition of that valuable instruction, which the institutions to which they belonged were intended to impart. It was almost impossible that at one and the same time they could do their duty to the society, and their duty as students of the college to which they belonged."³⁵

VI. Pearychand Mitra

(1814-1883)

Pearychand Mitra, one of the most brilliant students of Derozio, was closely associated with his friends, Rasikkrishna Mullick, Ramgopal Ghosh and Tarachand Chakravarty in all public activities. He was a prominent contributor to the *Gyananneshun* and the *Bengal Spectator*. He was appointed the Deputy Librarian of the Calcutta Public Library, when it was established in 1835. He remained connected with this Library throughout his life. He was an enthusiastic member of the 'Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge,'

became the first Secretary of the Bengal British India Society, and materially helped the British Indian Association by his encyclopaedic knowledge. He was also closely connected with the Agri-horticultural Society and the Bengal Social Science Association. He wrote excellent biographies of David Hare, Peter Grant and Ramkamal Sen; and contributed articles to the *Calcutta Review* and the *Englishman*. He is regarded as one of the creators of modern Bengali prose style; and his contributions to Bengali literature are hardly less important than those of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Akshoykumar Dutta and Bankimchandra Chatterjee.

Pearychand combined in himself the two roles of a political philosopher and a practical reformer. His speculations on the origin and functions of Government are of some importance to the students of political thought. He was familiar with the current theories of the origin of government. He was of opinion that private property gave birth to government. He thus substantiated his argument:—"Whatever diversity of opinion there may be on the origin of Government—whether it was traceable to contract, heavenly ordination, or the natural course of events, there can be no question as to political institutions having been subsequent to the existence of private property. The idea of property, as being the produce of labour, is natural with man. Land unreclaimed from sterility is common property. It is the first tillage and cultivation which constitutes private property. In proportion as agricultural pursuits are thus carried on, the curtailment of the natural liberty and the want of mutual protection are felt; and it is private property, which gives rise to government, and not government to private property."³⁶ The influence of Locke is quite apparent here. Pearychand made a practical application of this theory by insisting on the paramount duty of the Government to protect the rights of private property of the Ryots. He tried to prove from the Manu Samhita that land-revenue in ancient India was a tax and not rent, and that the tax was paid as 'the price of protection'. So it was incumbent on the present Government to protect the rights of the Ryots against the oppression of the Zamindars as well as of others. He did not believe in the *laissez-faire* theory of the functions of government. He maintained that the weak and the poor require special protection from the Government.

"It should be the duty of the ruling authority to protect equally all classes of its subjects, but the opulent and powerful do not require so much of its constant care and anxiety as the poor and helpless."³⁷

He maintained that no Government can adequately discharge its legitimate functions without consulting the opinion of the governed. So he advocated the inclusion of Indians in the Legislative Council. On the eve of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1853, he wrote a pamphlet on behalf of the British Indian Association entitled "Notes on the Evidence on Indian Affairs". In it he analysed the evidence given by Lord Ellenborough,* Sir H. Maddock, H. T. Prinsep, Lord Hardinge, Mr. F. J. Halliday, John Stuart Mill and J. C. Marshman before the Committees of the two Houses in 1852 regarding the inclusion of Indians

* Lord Ellenborough's evidence is of peculiar interest to the students of constitutional history of India. Long before the time of Sir Syed Ahmad, Mahammad Yusuf. H. H. the Aga Khan and Lord Morley, he suggested the creation of two chambers of Legislature in India—one for the Hindus and another for the Mohammedans. He thought it "very desirable and expedient that there should be formed, by the selection of the Government of Calcutta, bodies of Natives, Hindoos and Mussalmans respectively two separate bodies, to which bodies should be communicated, for their consideration and opinion all projects, bearing upon their respective laws, customs and religion. I would not, by any means, give to such bodies the power of negating any law the government thought fit to pass; I think, there should be, not merely that publicity, which is now given to all intended Acts of the Legislature, which invites observation and enables the Natives to state their objections, if they have any, but that they should be enabled to state their objection with that weight which always attaches to a regularly constituted body."—Commons' Report, 1852, p.233. Quoted by Pearychand in the above-mentioned pamphlet.

It is to be noted in this connection that Rammohun Roy secured a pledge from Lord Ellenborough that the Lord would "advocate on all occasions an enlightened policy to his (Rammohun's) countrymen."—'The Reformer' quoted in the *India Gazette*, January 29, 1833. 'The Reformer' quoted the authority of the "Bengal Harukaru" for this information.

in the Legislative Council. Pearychand observed that Lord Ellenborough and Sir Herbert Maddock were for a consultative Board of Indians; Halliday, Maddock, J. Sullivan and Sir G. R. Clerk thought that competent Indians could be found for filling up the seats in the Legislative Council. Halliday remarked that the Hindus and the Mussalmans were divided and so the representation of Indians would be difficult. Pearychand was the first public man in India to combat the idea of separate representation of different communities. He wrote:—"This remark (of Halliday) as to divisions applies to the social and religious state of the country, and the matters on which differences exist have little connection with legislation, and do not require separate representation (*e.g.*, widow marriage, child marriage, inter-dining, Shradh, recital of Veda for Idolatry—these questions are not intended for Legislature).† That body want generally information on subjects connected with the internal administration of the country, on which the people think and feel substantially in the same manner; and even supposing that the community is divided in opinion on subject coming within the cognizance of the Legislature, who but a Native can be competent to report the sentiments of the people at large?"

He also showed that in the Ceylonese Legislature there were 9 official and 6 non-official members and one of the latter was a Ceylonese. He cited the example of Jamaica, where "persons of colour are admitted to all the privileges of white persons and about a dozen 'coloured men' sit in the house of Assembly." (Quoted by Pearychand from Bigelow's 'Jamaica in 1850.') He, therefore, argued that "when Ceylonese and Negroes are entrusted with legislation, not only justice, but a regard to the interests of this country requires that the Natives should also be employed in similar situations."³⁸

Pearychand was a strong advocate of Indianization of services. He held that principles of equity, economy and the good of India can be promoted only by opening all offices to qualified Indians. He wrote in 1846:—"If the interests of the

† This statement shows that Pearychand was not prepared to invite legislative interference in social matters. His brother, Kishorichand, however, held the contrary view.

country are to be served, the line of demarcation which now exists between the covenanted and the uncovenanted must be broken down, as properly qualified candidates increase in number."³⁹ He reiterated his view in the above-mentioned pamphlet in 1853.

He was one of the champions of the cause of the Ryots. I believe that the numerous articles on the miseries of the peasants in the *Bengal Spectator* were written by Pearychand. I have come to this conclusion from the comparison of style and the views expressed by him in his article on "The Zamindar and the Ryot" in the sixth volume of the *Calcutta Review* with the articles referred to above in the *Bengal Spectator*. He ascribed the misery of the Ryots to "the radically wrong basis of the permanent settlement—the grinding consequences of the sub-letting system, and uncertainty of the tenure arising from the unadjustment of the *nerik*—the pernicious effect of the Mahajani system—the imposition of the *Zamindari* and *Naibi* abwabs—the oppression of the Zamindar or his agent—the too general inefficiency and apathy of the administrative authorities—the veniality of the ministerial officers—the defectiveness of the adjective law—the bad influence of taxes upon legal proceedings—the abuses of the *Huftam* and *Panjam* Regulations, and the tyranny of many Indigo Planters."⁴⁰ He emphasised the importance of protecting the Ryots from these multifarious oppressions by stating his conviction that "in proportion as the rights of its cultivating classes are protected, their grievances redressed and condition elevated, the agriculture and commercial state of the country will be improved, the progress of crime checked, intelligence promoted and happiness diffused".

He suggested two means for affording protection of law to the poor Ryots. One was the abolition of the stamp-duty on judicial proceedings. He quoted the opinion of Jeremy Bentham to show how law-taxes were detrimental to the dispensation of justice. Another means suggested by him was the revival of the village Panchayat. "This is a useful institution and the people should be encouraged to refer all petty complaints for arbitration to that tribunal."⁴¹

He believed like Akshoykumar that the spread of education would do much to mitigate the sufferings of the Ryots. So he appealed to the Government to spread vernacular education and to teach agriculture in all schools and colleges.⁴² In a meeting of the Bengal Social Science Association held on the 22nd January, 1869, he expressed his belief that "there was an intimate connection between crime and the spread of education. The condition was not so obvious in England, because there was no universal system of popular education, but it might be seen in operation on the continent. He believed that if popular education were properly promoted, crime would decrease."⁴³

VII. Kishorichand Mitra

(1822-1873)

The life and activities of Kishorichand Mitra, the gifted brother of Pearychand Mitra, have been ably described by S. Manmathanath Ghosh in his biography of Kishorichand and by Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikary in an article in the *Calcutta Review*. We note down below a few of the political ideas of Kishorichand.

The political faith of Kishorichand and its affinity to the ideas of Raja Rammohun may be best illustrated from the 'Introductory Discourse', read at the Hindu Theophilanthropic Society in 1843. He said:—"I would be the first person to reprobate the narrow and short-sighted policy of our Merchant Princes—our joint-stock sovereigns—to advocate the abolition of their salt and opium as well as their administrative monopoly, in order that the Natives may participate in the benefits of an unfettered commerce, and enjoy those situations of emolument and responsibility to which they are entitled. I am firmly persuaded that one of the best means for regenerating and elevating India is to do her political justice—to free her from the political disabilities under which she labours—to render the path of political distinction accessible to her children—to realise the benevolent intentions of the last Charter as embodied in the 87th clause—to give them a share in the administration of their country, by levelling that distinction of covenanted and uncovenanted service

which a blind self-interest has upreared—by annihilating the ‘aristocracy of skin’ and recognising merit and not complexion as worthy of reward. But political elevation alone, exclusive of intellectual and what is more, of moral and religious elevation cannot realise the hopes of the friends of India.”⁴⁴

As he advocated the recognition of the principle of equality of status in Government service, so did he hold equality before the eye of law to be a cardinal principle of constitutional form of Government. In his *Memoirs of Dwarkanath* he went out of his way to condemn the efforts of Dwarkanath to maintain the judicial privileges of the British-born subjects. He observed:—“The exemption of British-born subjects from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts in the Mofussil is unconstitutional in itself, unjust in principle, and often oppressive in practice.”

He held it as an essential function of Government to provide education to the people. On the 24th July, 1867, he said before the Bengal Social Science Association that “education of the proper type would effect such a regeneration in my countrymen as will make them, under the guidance of an enlightened government, willing and able instruments to work out their prosperity and happiness.”⁴⁵ Unlike his brother, Pearychand, he was in favour of legislative interference in purely social matters, which demanded reform. He formed “The Association of Friends for the Promotion of Social Improvement”, which used to meet at his own house. The Association “sent up to the Legislative Council the first petition against polygamy and it has followed up the efforts of others with another representation on the same subject. It proposed a new Marriage Act as applicable to the marriage of all classes of the population.”⁴⁶

Like his brother, Kishorichand too attached great importance to the elevation of the condition of the Ryots. He is the first Indian, I believe, to apply Buckle’s theory to interpret the history of the degradation and enslavement of the peasants of India. Bankimchandra in his essays on the ‘Peasants of Bengal’ further developed this theory. In a meeting of the Bethune Society, held on the 14th January 1864, he read a paper on “Agriculture”, and in it he showed by ‘appropriate quotations from Buckle and Mill, that it was

the most vulgar of all errors to attribute the diversities of conduct and character in nations to inherent natural differences.⁴⁷

VIII. Govindachandra Dutta

Govindachandra Dutta, son of Rasamay Dutta, and father of the gifted poetesses Taru and Aru Dutta, was a brilliant student of the Hindu College. He got a senior scholarship in 1841 and was appointed a Deputy Magistrate. Subsequently, he was promoted to the Finance Department. He was converted into Christianity, but in political ideas and aspirations he was at one with the other disciples of Rammohun Roy. He wrote a series of articles on literature, philosophy and British Indian administration in the *Calcutta Review*. Of these articles, one on "Administration of Criminal Justice in Bengal" published in 1846, is specially important for our purpose. This article reveals the writer's thorough knowledge of the theory and working of the Constitutions of contemporary France and England and shows his eagerness to secure the benefits of constitutional government in India.

The criterion which he sets up for judging the merit of a particular form of government is the degree of protection afforded to the citizens. His distrust of village self-government is as lively as that of Raja Rammohun Roy. He thinks that the direct management of executive details by village communities has always, even under the most favourable circumstances, failed to succeed. "In such a country as India, it is morally certain to fail."⁴⁸ He characterises the government which prevailed in Bengal before the time of Lord Cornwallis as feudal in form. He is of opinion that the feudal government of Zamindars was not, on the whole, a series of unmitigated evils, wanton oppressions and chaotic disorders. "Tyrannical and cruel themselves, the nobility of the country ruled absolute over their own dominions—seldom permitting strangers to interfere in matters connected with their tenantry, whom they considered their own exclusive property, and putting down all crimes, except those which they themselves committed, with a rod of iron."⁴⁹ As regards the British Government, he complains that up to the time of Lord

Amherst, the Government, which was powerful enough to fight against the Mahrattas, Chait Sing, Nepal and Burma. "surveyed for a time with an apparent indifference for which it is not easy to find any reasonable excuse, these enormities perpetrated under its eyes, upon those who looked up to it, with undeniable rightfulness for assistance and protection." Even at the time when he was writing this article (1846), the villagers were being molested by large bands of dacoits. He suggests various reforms in the administration of the country with a view to bringing in the reign of law in India. Of these suggestions we shall take up for discussion only a few.

It is generally believed by writers like Pandit Shivanath Shastri, Sj. Manmathanath Ghosh and Sj. Satishchandra Chakravarty that Ramgopal Ghosh was the first and the only Indian to raise his voice against the judicial privileges of the British-born subjects before 1851. But in the year 1846 Govindachandra wrote:—"The necessity of dealing with all alike, of breaking down the invidious distinction of having one description of tribunal for the governors, and another for the governed, is too evident to be questioned. The injustice to the natives of exempting a class of wealthy persons, 'who now enjoy a right of free resort to the interior', from the jurisdiction of the local authorities, which are always open to them against the people, appears to us to be an evil too glaring to be of long continuance. The sooner, therefore, the present system is done away with, the better."

Contemporaneously with Pearychand Mitra, Govindachandra pleaded for equalization of pay and prospects of the uncovenanted service with the covenanted. He complains that the highest salary which a Deputy Magistrate could draw being Rs. 350, it is a miserable recompense for the high qualifications possessed by Indian Deputy Magistrates. He thinks that a responsible post must carry such a salary as would make the incumbent free from corruption.

Next to Rammohun Roy, Govindachandra was the most powerful advocate of the theory of separation of powers in the first half of the nineteenth century. He condemns the concentration of judicial and executive power—the functions of thief-catcher and thief-trier—in the hands of the Magistrates

as injurious to offenders, to the community and to the Magistrates themselves. The offenders cannot get unbiassed judgment, the community awaiting judicial trials suffers from the pre-occupation of the Magistrate with executive affairs, and the Magistrates suffer in dignity from their odious occupation as constables. He asserts that "there is scarcely any principle in jurisprudence more important than the separation of these two offices."⁵⁰

To Govindachandra, the liberty of person is such a sacred thing that he would not allow the magistrate to imprison even a man of bad character on mere suspicion. He writes:—"In France or England, the idea of imprisoning a freed convict, merely because he was a bad character, and without satisfactory proofs of any overt offence, committed by him, would be scouted as preposterous. In no country is it recognised as a principle of government. On the contrary, it is an arbitrary violation of personal liberty which should, except under peculiar circumstances, be held sacred." He went so far as to suggest that even if this arbitrary power of the magistrate be found to have actually repressed crime, it should be given up. He remarks sarcastically:—"If the most effectual mode of repressing crime be that of hanging all the bad characters, it seems about as reasonable to hang people, as to imprison them, without proof of specific crime."⁵¹

The ideas referred to above illustrate clearly the influence of the Western political ideas on the minds of Indian youths in the first half of the last century.

IX. Girishchandra Ghosh

(1829-1869)

The writings of Girishchandra Ghosh the founder and first editor of *The Hindu Patriot* and *The Bengalee* have been collected and published in a handy volume by his grandson S. Manmathanath Ghosh, who has also compiled and edited a biography of his grandfather. Having left school at the age of sixteen, Girishchandra first entered the Financial Department as a junior clerk, and in 1850 joined the Military Pay Examiner's Office, where he eventually rose to become the Registrar.

Girishchandra's political views are extremely conservative in character. Like Raja Rammohun, he entertained a very high opinion of the beneficial character of British Government in India. He held that the educated Indians had not yet become fit for taking the responsibility of their country's administration on their own shoulders. "By subverting the British rule, even if it were in their power to do so—they would only prepare their necks for another and perhaps, a heavier foreign yoke."⁵² He would not advise the people, or the Government to undertake any reform without weighty considerations. Commenting on the Civil Service Bill, he wrote:—"We have a distrust for all changes except such as are called for by the imperative necessities of altered times. Undoubtedly, the Indian Government requires to be reconstructed. But the process should be one of great judgment and extreme cautions."⁵³ It would be wrong, however, to think that he was a believer in Eldonian Toryism. His political principles were akin to those held by Sir Robert Peel after the issue of the Tamworth Manifesto. In 1858 he wrote in the *Calcutta Monthly Review*:—"The excellence of all political institutions will be found, on ultimate analysis, to consist in the judicious and skilful combination of the elements of stability and progress. When the two are not in equivalent proportions, society is not in a state of radical union; there is no internal cohesion of its parts. Mechanical pressure from without may for a time hold them together, but ever and anon the discordant elements seek for an outlet and a vent, and the violence with which the compound breaks and bursts at last is proportioned always to the intensity and tightness of the compressing force."⁵⁴

As progressive measures he advocated, like Rammohun, the spread of education and along with it the employment of educated Indians to posts of trust and responsibility.⁵⁵

Girishchandra was not much of a democrat. He thought that as India had been governed in the past by a king, served and supported by a number of nobles, Indians were familiar with that form of government alone. In 1863 he wrote an article in *The Bengalee* supporting direct recruitment to the Civil Service. In it he remarked:—"The natives of India understand fully their position under a class of recognised

aristocrats. They have merely transferred their reverence from the Omrah of the Mogul Court to the Omrah of the British administration. Essentially dynastic in their sympathies, they can ill appreciate a sovereign without a hereditary body of nobles to serve her."⁵⁶

His hostility to democracy led him so far as to oppose trial by jury, for securing which all the leaders of this period had made so much effort. Girishchandra wrote:—"Trial by jury, to whom the English law allows functions more important, difficult and responsible than are allowed to the judge, is looked upon by all philosophical jurists as one of the relics of mediaeval barbarism, and the strong and unreasoning conservatism of Englishmen in general has yet preserved it as a positive institution after it has been speculatively discarded by the greatest thinkers."⁵⁷

X. Harishchandra Mukherjee

(1824-1861)

Like Girishchandra, Harishchandra was a self-made man, without the advantage of high connection and collegiate education.* He had to give up his studies in the Union School at the age of 14 or 15. He began his career as a clerk on rupees twenty-five a month in the Military Auditor General's office and rose to a responsible post in that department by virtue of his sterling qualities. His talent as a journalist was first appreciated by the readers of the *Hindu Intelligencer*, to which he used to contribute articles. In 1852 he became a member of the British Indian Association, and soon acquired an influential position in it. He founded a branch of the Brahmo Samaj at Bhowanipur and began to preach religious reform in it. He took over the charge of the *Hindu Patriot* from Girishchandra in 1856. His political ideas are to be gleaned from the editorial articles of the *Hindu Patriot*.

Harishchandra was fully conscious of the benefits conferred by the rule of the East India Company on India. In 1858 he

* Sambhoocharan Mukherjee projected a biography of Harishchandra. The portion he wrote has been published in the 'Bengal, Past and Present'. 1914, April-June, pp. 284-89.

wrote: "The Company has carried order where it was chaos, imposed laws on lawless herds of banditti, given security to possession and property, where it was perpetual danger and disturbance, scattered the luxuries of European civilisation, diffused the blessings of Anglo-Saxon energy and industry, founded an admirable system of political equality, and brought justice to the poor man's door."⁵⁸ But these benefits did not blind him to the defects of the Government. The defects, which according to him needed reform, were pointed out by him in the following words: "We ask, for instance, that the dualism of a really controlling and a nominally directing authority over the acts of the local governments may be done away with.* We ask that the local legislature may contain within its body a non-official element, one that may control in some measure the not always well-guided action of official legislators. We want an improvement of the judicial system. leaving it to the wisdom of government and of Parliament to decide the particular mode in which the improvement is to be effected. We want that the acknowledged right of the native Indian subjects of the Crown to participate in the government of their own country be no longer allowed to be set at naught by the executive. We want that the immense capabilities of British India may be opened to legitimate enterprise by the removal of fiscal imposts of a prejudicial character."⁵⁹

He maintained that there had been an equilibrium of forces in the government of the country up to very recent time. The Civil Service, the Supreme Court, and the Zamindars formed, as it were, the three estates of the realm. "They balanced each other, checked and counterchecked each other, and under the shade of a constitution founded on British principles but adapted to Asiatic circumstances, and framed with such special reference to the exigencies of future progress, the country advanced rapidly in wealth, prosperity and

* It is difficult to say from the passage quoted above whether he demanded the abolition of political power of the Company. In the articles published on the 14th January and the 25th February, 1858, he vigorously protested against the abolition of the Company's power. Thus he proved himself a disciple of Rammohun.

civilisation.”⁶⁰ But in recent times a new force, the educated middle class, had come into existence and destroyed the equilibrium of the constitution. They should be admitted freely into the Civil Service and a share of political power should be entrusted to them. In an article on the ‘Amalgamation of Supreme and Sudder Courts’, he further argued that the bulk of property is in the hands of Indians; and “it is not in the nature of things, that property can long be dissociated from political power.”⁶¹ While the British Parliament was busily engaged in making arrangements for the transfer of India from the Company to the Crown, Harishchandra raised the first cry for the recognition of the right of self-determination. He wrote: “Can a revolution in the Indian Government be authorised by Parliament without consulting the wishes of the vast millions of men for whose benefit it is proposed to be made? The reply must be in the negative... The time is nearly come when all Indian questions must be solved by Indians. The mutinies have made patent to the English public what must be the effects of politics in which the Native is allowed no voice.”⁶²

Harishchandra was opposed to two of the political ideas of Raja Rammohun. The Raja had pleaded for the codification of Civil and Criminal laws, but Harish opposed the codification of the Penal laws on the ground that “codification can only succeed under a despotism, and codified law is always inimical to public liberty.”⁶³ Another idea of the Raja to which Harish was opposed, was the colonization of India by British settlers.⁶⁴

As an important member of the British Indian Association, Harishchandra lavished high praises on the Permanent Settlement which he regarded “as the most powerful bond which will unite Hindoostan to Britain.” He ascribed the failure of the Sepoy Mutiny in Bengal to the Permanent Settlement.⁶⁵ He believed education to be the most effective preventive against the outbreak of rebellion. But the Government, in his opinion, should direct its efforts to the imparting of the highest order of knowledge to those alone who belong to the upper classes in society. These highly educated upper classes would diffuse knowledge among all other classes in the society.⁶⁶

Though Harishchandra thus identified himself with the upper classes, he was ever watchful of the interests of the masses. His selfless and arduous efforts on behalf of the poor peasants during the Indigo agitation have justly acquired for him the title of "the friend of the Ryots".

CHAPTER V

THE LIBERAL SCHOOL OF POLITICAL THOUGHT (1861-1884)

I. Introduction

In the preceding chapters we have tried to show how Raja Rammohun, the Hindu College students and the political disciples of the Raja prepared the ground for the rise of the Democratic and Nationalist movement in Bengal. The movement started by the Raja received a great impetus from the simultaneous operation of five correlated forces. These were wider diffusion of English education, researches of the Orientalists into the past history of India, reaction against Western civilisation in favour of Hinduism, rapid improvement in the means of communication, and political movements in Western countries.

Of these five forces the most important was the spread of English education. As early as 1838, Sir Charles Trevelyan observed that amongst those who had received 'English education' "the most sanguine dimly look forward in the distant future to the establishment of a national representative assembly as the consummation of their hopes—all of them being fully sensible that these plans of improvement could only be worked out with the aid and protection of the British Government by the gradual improvement of their countrymen in knowledge and morality."¹ The Calcutta University being established in 1857 began to turn out a large number of men with collegiate education. Between 1857 and 1871 1,495 students passed the F. A. Examination, 548 the B. A. Examination, and 112 the M. A. Examination. Between 1872 and 1882, 2,666 students passed the F. A. Examination, 1,037 the B. A. Examination and 284 the M. A. Examination from

the Calcutta University.² The effect of this diffusion of collegiate education is noted by Sir Richard Temple in the following words: "The educated Natives are also moved by aspirations for self-government, for political power, and even for representative institutions the concession of which does not at present fall within the range of practical politics. Such ideas have been mooted in former times, but have never been so fully defined, nor so openly declared, as they are at present." In another place he observes :

"There is danger of discontent being engendered in the minds of educated Natives, if adequate and suitable employment does not offer itself to them in various directions. As all the arts and sciences which have helped to make England what she is, are offered for, even pressed on the acceptance of, the Natives, it must be expected that those who do accept these advantages will be animated by hopes and stirred by emotions, to which they were previously strangers. They will evince an increasing jealousy of any monopoly of advantage in any respect being tained in favour of Europeans. They are already raising a cry, louder and louder, louder, the purport of which is 'India for the Indians.'³

The number of educated Bengalis increased so much indeed, that it became impossible for the Government to provide employment for them in public departments. Some of the most highly gifted young men of Bengal now tried to enter the hitherto closed arena of Indian Civil Service, which was thrown open to competition as a result of the agitation from the time of Rammohun to that of Harishchandra. While men like Satyendranath Tagore, Rameshchandra Dutt and Beharilal Gupta were fortunate enough to enter the Civil Service, others like Monomohan Ghosh and Lalmohan Ghosh failed, owing probably to some defects in the regulations for the examination, to get the much-coveted post. Surendranath Banerjē succeeded in entering the Civil Service indeed, but was compelled to resign owing to some technical mistakes attributed to him. These three dis-appointed candidates for the Civil Service, who had received the highest kind of Western education and had imbibed the Liberal and National spirit of the West from their sojourn in England, immensely strengthened the movement for Nationalism and Democracy

in India. With them were associated two others of the first generation of Indian barristers—W.C. Bonnerjee and Anandamohan Bose. The rank and file of the discontented middle class who supported these movements received their education in the schools and colleges of Bengal and could not find any employment, high or low. Even those who by reason of their worth and merit could get employment smarted under a sense of inferiority and subordination to the European members of their respective departments. We have referred to the existence of this feeling among the ex-students of the Hindu College in the second chapter. It is not unlikely that Bankimchandra, the greatest exponent of Nationalism in India, took to the preaching of this theory after he had met with disappointment in service. Bankimchandra is certainly the best specimen of Indian intellect and if a man like him is condemned to serve under those British members who are very much junior to him in service or inferior to him in quality, discontent is sure to arise in the heart of the person so superseded. Early in 1881 Bankim had a quarrel with Mr. Buckland, the District Magistrate of Howrah; in the middle of that year he was appointed Officiating Assistant Secretary to the Finance Department. On the 22nd January, 1882, he was transferred to the post of Deputy Magistrate; and the post of Assistant Secretary was converted into that of Under Secretary and was made a monopoly of the members of the Indian Civil Service.⁴ Bankimchandra published his nationalist novels, *Ananda Math* and *Devi Chaudhurani* in 1882* and in 1883 respectively and preached nationalism as a religion in his articles on Dharmatattva in the 'Nabajiban' of 1884. From a consideration of the dates mentioned above, it is not unlikely that Bankim's disappointment in Government service might have played a part in the enunciation of his theory of nationalism. Whatever might be the case with Bankimchandra, it is certain that the thwarted ambition of the educated youths of Bengal led them to look forward to the time when the democratic control over the machinery of

* According to Akshoy Chandra Sarkar the *Ananda Math* was completed at Hooghly in 1880 before Bankim's transfer to Howrah in Feb. 1881. *Bangadarsana*, Bhadra, 1819 B.S. (1912).

government would, they believed, give satisfaction to their desire for political preferment.

But it would be a mistake to attribute the rise of democratic and nationalist ideas solely to the spread of Western education and the consequent disappointment of educated youths. Other causes, far less materialistic than this, were at work in the sixties and seventies of the last century. The foundation of researches into the history, culture and civilisation of ancient India was laid down by Charles Wilkins, Sir William Jones, Anequetil du Perron and others in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. During the first three decades of the last century, Colebrooke and H. H. Wilson made important contributions to the study of ancient Indian civilisation. Then between 1840 and 1885 Roth published his 'Literature and History of the Vedas', Max Muller his text of the Rigveda and other books revealing the glories of the ancient Hindus, and Prinsep and Cunningham explored the ancient Indian art, epigraphy and archaeology. Being inspired by the researches of Western scholars, two Bengali antiquarians, Raja Rajendralal Mitra and Dr. Ramdas Sen, made original contributions in the seventies of the last century to our knowledge of ancient India. It is noteworthy that the former was a prominent member of the British Indian Association, and the latter devoted his attention to the writing of articles on ancient Indian jewellery and military weapons showing the splendour, military skill and prowess of the ancient Hindus. The researches of this devoted band of Western and Bengali scholars imparted a sense of self-confidence to the educated public in Bengal. They were especially overwhelmed with joy when they heard the praise of the achievements of the ancient Hindus from Western scholars like Max Muller.

The third cause which was responsible for the spread of nationalist ideas was a strong reaction against Western religion and civilisation, set in generally by men who had received the highest Western culture. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore might be called the leader and pioneer of this movement. He received his education in the Hindu College, but was averse to the use of English words in writing and conversation and opposed the conversion of Bengali youths into Christianity. The diffusion of knowledge about ancient

India as a result of the researches of the Orientalists further strengthened this movement. Bhudev Mukhopadhyay and Rajnarain Bose, class-mates in the Hindu College and two of the most brilliant students of that institution, set their face against the wholesale imitation of Western civilisation and preached the beauty and grandeur of Hindu culture. Both of them strongly advocated the use of Bengali language in social intercourse and public functions. Rajnarain Bose in his Autobiography relates how he along with his friends established a club, where members inadvertently using the English language had to pay a fine of one pice for each English word spoken. Rajnarain Bose delivered a lecture under the auspices of the National Society on 'The Superiority of Hinduism over all other forms of Faith' in 1872. About the same time Raja Kamalkrishna Bahadur and Kalikrishna Bahadur established the Sanatan Dharma Rakshini Sabha or Association for the defence of the Eternal Religion, for helping which Association Swami Dayananda, the greatest leader of the Hindu revival in northern India, visited Calcutta.⁵ In 1875 Keshabchandra Sen discovered for young Bengal the magnetic personality of Ramkrishna Paramahansa, who inspired the 'English-educated' people of Bengal with the lofty spiritual ideal of Hinduism. Improvements in the means of communication through railway, steamer service, good metalled roads and cheap postage, promoted national feeling in India as much as these did in contemporary Germany and Italy. Facilities of travel in the country induced the propagators of national democratic ideas to go on lecture-tours to Mofussil towns. Manomohan Ghosh and Surendranath Banerjea thus travelled from place to place delivering lectures on these new ideas. Cheap postage helped the circulation of vernacular newspapers, which were replete with these ideas.

Last, though not the least in importance, was the repercussion of Western political movements on the ideas of young Bengal. Between 1861 and 1884, Germany, Italy, Rumania, Servia and Montenegro attained national unification. During the same period the Second and Third Reform Bills were passed in England, the Third Republic was established in France, constitutional monarchy was set up in Italy and Spain, and for a short time Russia under Alexander

II evinced a desire for a constitutional form of government. The American constitution, too, was democratised during the same period. The influence of these movements reached Bengal not only through newspapers, magazines and books, but also through the Bengali youths who in ever-increasing number began to go to England and other Western countries for study.

The cumulative effect of the five causes noted above was seen in the rise of the national-democratic school of political thought in Bengal in the sixth decade of nineteenth century. Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan through the columns of his influential vernacular paper, the *Shomeprakash*, began to popularise the national-democratic ideas in the sixties and seventies of the last century. W. C. Bonnerjee in his speech before the East India Association in 1867 demanded representative and responsible government. Jogendranath Vidyabhushan began to preach nationalism through his biographies of Mazzini, Garibaldi and Wallace and through his monthly magazine, the *Arya Darshan*. In 1879, Lalmohan Ghosh went to England to create a favourable political atmosphere for the concession of self-governing institutions to India. Leaders of the Bengal public of this period paid greater attention to the systematic propaganda in England than their predecessors had done.

While Rajnarain Bose, Nabagopal Mitra, Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan, Sisirkumar Ghosh, Bankimchandra Chatterji and others were initiating the Bengal public into democratic and nationalist ideas, Chandranath Bose and Bholanath Chandra were preparing the ground for the practice of economic nationalism, which became the most prominent feature of the national movement in India since 1905.

II. Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan

(1819-1886)

No greater instance of the liberalising effect of the study of Western history and politics can be cited than that of Pandit Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan. He belonged to an orthodox Pandit family and having received education at the Sanskrit College became at first the Librarian and then a

Professor of the same institution. He used to teach Sanskrit grammar and literature in the College. When the Calcutta University was established, Pandit Vidyabhushan along with Rev. K. M. Banerjee and Ramchandra Mitter served on the Board of Examiners in Bengali for the B.A. Examination.⁶ He was deeply imbued with the traditions and culture of the Hindu society and he opposed the attempts of Keshabchandra to reform it. But his study of the history of Greece, Rome, England, France and of the British Colonies converted him into a Liberal in politics.⁷ He gave expression to his liberal views in the *Shomeprakash*, which he began to publish and edit from 1858. Pandit Shivanath Shastri, his nephew, says that the *Shomeprakash* exerted the greatest influence in the decade between 1860 and 1870.⁸

It is generally seen that people belonging to the orthodox school hold monarchy to be the best form of government. But Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan imbibed love of democracy from his classical studies. The result of the conflicting influences of his orthodox leanings and of classical spirit was that he became an advocate of the Mixed Constitution. He held that in the ancient world public opinion was consulted in every state. The English had the Witenagemot, the Hindus had the Sabha, the Arabs the Dewan and the Romans the Senate. He condemned absolutism as the worst form of government. Oligarchy too is not conducive to the well-being of the governed, for it failed in Rome and France. It was the rule of the Roman nobility which was responsible for the deterioration of the Roman character. The Government in France on the eve of the Revolution was in name monarchical but in reality oligarchical. The undue privileges of the French nobility imposed crushing burdens on the people. But undiluted democracy, meaning thereby the rule of the masses, too, is bad. This sort of democracy has been responsible for the bloody excesses of the French Revolution and the "present civil war in America." So Dwarakanath thinks that the mixed constitution is the best form of government. "Tacitus, indeed, doubted whether the unity of action and of division of power between the King, nobles and the people is conducive to general welfare. But the successful working of the English constitution proves that the 'mixed constitution' is the best. Moreover, the English constitution has been copied by the

Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal and Italy." So he comes to the conclusion that in India too the mixed constitution should be introduced.⁹

In 1879 he published a monthly magazine entitled *Kalpadrūm*. In it he wrote an article discussing the causes which give rise to despotism. He says that if the king forgets that he is nothing but the representative of the people, that his power is based on the wealth and welfare of his subjects, and that his opinion is to coincide with the popular wishes, he becomes a tyrant. But the country in which the majority of people are brave, educated and powerful, the king cannot have any opportunity of forgetting his real position. If perchance the king shows a leaning towards despotism, the people do not tolerate his arbitrary conduct for long. They either make him conscious of his duty or deprive him of his power. Thus, he concludes, the form of government really depends on the character of the people. This is why in some countries monarchy prevails, while in others republicanism flourishes. He holds that in ancient India monarchy was the normal form of government indeed, but it seldom degenerated into tyranny inasmuch as the Brahmans regulated the conduct of the rulers.¹⁰

As regards the functions of government, Vidyabhushan was an individualist. He maintains that government should not interfere in any matter excepting the machinery of government itself; and the people too should not allow the government to trespass this limit. He regrets that Indians depend too much on government. This is an evil heritage from ancient times, when the people held government responsible even for drought and premature death. Such an absolute dependence on government brings in idleness, inertia and lack of initiative. The French people, too, had depended too much on government in the past, with the result that repeated revolutions failed to secure their liberty.¹¹ He does not like the Government's interference with the commerce of the nation. He condemns the guaranteed system of railway construction and does not support the proposal of excavating canals under the direct management of the Government. He holds that a joint-stock company can undertake irrigation most profitably.¹²

He was not quite sure as to the scope of government activity in social matters. At first, he held that even the worst social abuses should not be removed by arbitrary laws. But if the government can secure the consent of the people, it may undertake social reforms. He condemned the practice of hook-swinging as immoral, vicious and brutal, but he sought for its remedy in popular education and not in legislative interference.¹³ A few months later in an article he poured forth his righteous indignation on the practice of selling brides and regretted that the people of India could not themselves remove social abuses without taking the help of Government legislation. So they must be compelled by law to give up evil social practices. Those matters which were not connected with religion might be brought under governmental control.¹⁴ But in another article he condemned the attempt at the abolition of polygamy with the help of government. He expressed the apprehension that if Government were once asked to interfere in a specific social matter, it might also interfere in other matters. The people would then lose control over social life too.¹⁵

As an advocate of the 'mixed constitution,' Pandit Vidyabhushan saw the necessity of having a truly representative legislature in India. He expressed his dissatisfaction at the utter dependence of the Legislature on the Executive in India. "The Governor-General could convene the Legislative Council anywhere he liked and the members of the Legislature could not introduce any bill without the previous sanction of the Governor-General. The Legislative Council had been instituted because the Governor-General could not discharge the law-making and executive functions equally. If both the Legislative Council and the Governor-General be the representatives of the Queen, why should one representative dominate over the other?"¹⁶ He adduced other reasons for the establishment of fully representative legislature with full control over taxation and expenditure. He shows that the criterion of a civilised government is the observance of the principle of 'no taxation without representation.' "This principle is conducive not only to the happiness of the subjects but also to the stability of the government. If taxes are raised and spent with the consent of the people, a close identity of interest between the

government and the governed follows.¹⁷ People would then pay taxes gladly without any demur according to the necessities of the government. Government, too, would find that their duty would be discharged simply by submitting accounts. There could be no better means of establishing government than the observance of the great constitutional principle."¹⁸ Another argument which he brought forward in favour of establishing representative legislature was the example of the autonomy of the British Colonies. If representative and responsible government could operate successfully in Africa, Canada and Australia, why should it not succeed in India? He pointed out the successful working of the British Indian Association to show the fitness of Indians for representative government, it is only by practical experience that a nation acquires the capacity of self-government.

He liked to have some Indian representatives in the British Parliament to correct the misconceptions which led to the enactment of laws prejudicial to the interest of India.¹⁹ But he knew that such a suggestion would not be welcomed by the authorities. So he suggested later on that the Indian public should raise a monthly subscription of Rs. 3,000 and send three representatives to England to explain the Indian views correctly to the British public.²⁰ This was but a part of his political programme. He would not be satisfied with anything less than a truly representative legislative body in India.²¹ It is curious to note that he opposed the establishment of separate provincial legislatures on the ground that it would impede the progress of national Unity.²²

A free press, according to him, is the only means of securing good government and preventing revolution. He repeats the argument of Raja Rammohun to show that if the government remove the grievances represented in the press, the people would remain contented.²³

Like many other Indian political writers, Pandit Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan was also an advocate of the extension of the jury system. He supports his contention by arguing that the case which is decided by the many is judged from all points of view minutely; while the intellect of a single judge cannot penetrate into all its mysteries.²⁴

There was a general demand by the Indian public for the reduction of expenditure of government after the Mutiny. Vidyabhushan too held that retrenchment was necessary, but he deprecated the attempt to reduce the salary of the Governor-General from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 12,000. He thought a reduced salary would not attract the first-rate statesmen of England. He suggested the reduction of the salary of Civilians and of the number of European soldiers.²⁵ But in 1880 he opposed the scheme of reducing the salary of Civilians on the ground that it would bring back bribery and corruption. At that time he emphasised the necessity of reducing the military expenditure only.²⁶

Like Akshoykumar Dutt and Sisirkumar Ghosh, he too condemned capital punishment. He thought that the awarding of capital punishment was the sign of inability and ignorance of the government. Death sentence has been prevalent from the dawn of history, but it has not deterred men from committing murder. Unlike Akshoykumar he held that transportation should be sufficient punishment for the most heinous crimes. But the guilty persons should be transported to a place where they could become useful to society by being employed in agricultural pursuits.²⁷

Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan was one of the earliest champions of education of the masses. He held that it was useless spending government money on the education of the sons of the landed aristocracy. Most of them were idle, licentious and polygamous. Those few amongst them who were so inclined might receive education at their own expenses. So Government should try to educate the middle and the poorer classes. If the latter were educated, the higher classes would educate themselves out of shame.²⁸ Along with literary education, physical training should also be imparted to students in schools.²⁹

We find very few original ideas in the writings of Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan. But he had the great power of educating the people by popularising the political principles of the liberal school.

III. *Rev. Lalbehari De* (1824-1894)

Lalbehari De, the famous author of the *Govinda Samanta*, was a student of Dr. Alexander Duff and accepted Christianity

under his influence. He was an eminent educationist like his co-religionist, Dr. K. M. Banerjee. Dr. K. M. Banerjee and Lalbehari De accepted a foreign faith indeed, but being influenced by the spirit of the time demanded the establishment of a "National Church of India." The latter fought for equality of status of Indian missionaries with European missionaries and gained his point, though he had to accept a lower salary.

Lalbehari De was neither a political agitator nor a political philosopher. But his writings reveal an intimate acquaintance with the political thought of Plato, Aristotle, Sir Thomas More and John Stuart Mill. When men like Digambar Mitra, Kishorichand Mitra and Sisirkumar Ghosh opposed the compulsory vernacular education of the masses, Lalbehari made efforts to induce the Government to take the responsibility of educating the masses. He delivered two lectures on 'Primary education in Bengal' and 'Compulsory education' on the 10th December, 1868, and 19th January, 1869, before the Bethune Society and the Bengal Social Science Association respectively. The subject-matter of these lectures comes within our scope because he referred to and discussed in these lectures whether "education is to be made a civil right, and how far legislative interference is expedient."³⁰

The question of primary education acquired importance when Sir John Lawrence, in a communication dated the 28th April 1868, emphasised the need of educating the masses, declared the incompetency of the State Exchequer to sustain the burden of education, and called upon the Bengal Government to take speedy measures for chalking out a plan of national education by levying an educational cess on land. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal referred the matter to the British Indian Association. The latter passed the following Resolution on it: "That the compulsory taxation for education was unnecessary, inasmuch as the existing voluntary system together with Government grants-in-aid was able alone to accomplish the object; and secondly, the proposed educational cess on land was a direct infringement of a solemn covenant of Government, confirmed by the British Parliament". The immediate object of Lalbehari De's lectures was to combat

these opinions. Kishorichand Mitra had said in the British Indian Association: "The lower strata of the social fabric must be permeated through the higher strata. Educate the upper and middle classes, and the lower classes will be instructed and elevated". Lalbehari replied to this by observing that a similar sentiment was expressed thirty years ago by the old Council of Education, which shelved Mr. Adam's scheme of vernacular education, and more recently by Lord Canning in an address at the meeting of the Convocation of the Calcutta University. But the education of the masses had not been advanced by the education of the classes.

Mr. De showed the importance of educating the masses by defining the relation between the individual and the society. He said before the Bengal Social Science Association: "As soon as a child is ushered into being, he becomes a member of human society; and when he grows up and acts for himself, he exercises an influence, beneficial or otherwise, on other members of that society. An educated man whose mind has been cultivated, who is acquainted with his own duties and rights, and with those of his fellowmen, cannot but exercise a salutary influence on the community in which he moves; whereas an uneducated man, whom nothing but his erect form distinguishes from the brutes around him, proves very often a curse, at all events an encumbrance and a drag on society". Such being the importance of educating an individual for the welfare of the community, Mr. De concludes that it is "the duty of the guardians of society, that is, of the State, to interfere in the matter and to insist upon every parent educating his children". He then shows by quoting Aristotle and Mill that from ancient times political philosophers have recognised the making of provision for education as a function of government. He again reiterates his view: "In order therefore, to make the people of Bengal self-reliant, they must be educated, and as they cannot educate themselves, the State must do the work for them."

Lalbehari De also maintains that the spread of education would diminish the number of crimes. He said: "If we spend 60 lakhs every year for catching rogues and thieves, I submit, it is not too much to spend that sum in teaching Her Majesty's subjects to be honest and useful citizens." At that time there

was a proposal for erecting cellular type of jails. Referring to this he said: "Why waste the money of the public in adding to the severity of the punishment of burglars and dacoits, when the same money might be more profitably spent upon the education of the people, which would prevent them from becoming burglars and dacoits? For I believe that schools, and not jails, whether cellular or other, are the best preventives of crime."³²

Mr. Howell in his "Note on the State of Education in India during 1866-67" referred to the colleges and schools of India as "State charities". Lalbehari De held that the people have got a right to be educated at Government expense. He said: "I should like to ask Mr. Howell—Who paid the revenue from which the State is giving the charity? Is it the people of England or the people of India?"³³ But he was not averse to fresh taxation for imparting compulsory primary education. In reply to the claim of the Zamindars to be exempted from any fresh scheme of taxation he said: "The Permanent Settlement may make them liable or may not make them liable to pay—I decided not the question—but surely there is a higher law than the law of the Revenue Code. There is the law of Moral Justice and this higher law demands that every Zamindar in the country should bear a large part of the expense of educating the Ryot."³⁴

As regards the principle of introducing compulsion in securing attendance of all boys of school-going age, he maintains that the principle would not be foreign to the feeling and sentiment of the people of Bengal. The people of Bengal had lived for centuries under a despotic system of government. "So far from looking upon Government as a necessary evil, like John Bull, he looks upon it as his Ma-Bap, his father and mother. Amongst such a Government-ridden people, the voluntary principle must be an unmeaning phrase."

His scheme of compulsory system of primary education was as follows: All boys between the age of 6 and 12 should be compelled to attend schools; for educating them 40,000 primary schools, 80 normal schools for training the teachers, and 8 vernacular high schools would be required; the expenses of these together with scholarships worth rupees there lakhs

and cost of inspection, another three lakhs, would be sixty lakhs of rupees. He proposed that 10 lakhs should be raised in the shape of fees from students, Government should contribute 21 lakhs, the Zamindars should pay two per cent of the land revenue and thus contribute 7 lakhs, and 22 lakhs should be raised by enhancing the salt-tax by two annas in the rupee.

Though a Christian, Lalbehari De was a defender of Hindu society against the attacks of Western writers. Writing about the position of women in India he protested against the view that they were regarded "here in the light of slaves, cattle and household property" and added, "That much of their time is devoted to all sorts of in-door work is true, but is not that the case even in England?"

In his famous work *Govinda Samanta*, he wrote, "English people have somehow or other got the idea that a Hindu widow receives harsh and cruel treatment from the relations of her husband. This is not true." He added: "It is not she is persecuted and tormented by her relations and friends—that is a fiction of foreign writers, of people unacquainted with Hindu life in its actual manifestations."

Lalbehari De entertained greatest sympathy for the cultivators and ryots. In a paper contributed to the Calcutta Review in June, 1859 he wrote: "They have been greatly abused. Systematic oppression from time immemorial has paralyzed their energies, deprived them of their native manliness and reduced them to the ignoble condition of slaves. Their own countrymen have proved to be their cruellest oppressors and most inveterate foes. The Zamindar's Katchery is the scene of the ryot's degradation where he is derided, spat upon and treated as if he were the veriest vermin of creation."

IV. Asutosh Mukherjee

Asutosh Mukherjee, the brilliant namesake of the still more brilliant Sir Asutosh Mukhopadhyay, was the first person to receive the Premchand Roychand Scholarship in the year 1868. He was a distinguished pleader of the Calcutta High Court. He wrote many articles on law, jurisprudence

and political science in the *Calcutta Review* and the *Mookerjee's Magazine*. He is also the author of the following books:—(1) *The Annals of British Land Revenue Administration in Bengal, 1698-1793*; (2) *An Examination of the Principles and Policy of the Bengal Tenancy Bill*, written at the request of the Central Committee of Landholders; (3) *The Position of Women in Bengal Society*. His political ideas, discussed below, are taken mainly from his articles on "Mr. Justice Markby's Elements of Law," published in September, 1872, and on "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" published in the *Mookerjee's Magazine* in August, 1873.

Like the other educated youngmen of his time, he was a devout disciple of John Stuart Mill. When James Fitz-James Stephen wrote his famous criticism of Mill's theory of Liberty, Asutosh defended his master with great skill and ingenuity in the *Mookerjee's Magazine* (August, 1873).

Asutosh was an individualist. He did not like to invest society with the power of coercing an individual even to lead a moral life. He did not believe that society can exercise its power with such a moderation as to welcome departures from the standard of conduct, followed by the majority of its members. He put forward his own idea in the following words: "But this supposes society to be endowed with such a degree of moderation, liberality and wisdom and such an accurate and scientific knowledge of the moral and emotional condition and needs of the individual, as society has never and nowhere displayed, nor taking the most sanguine view of the matter, may be expected to display at any future time with which we need now concern ourselves."³⁵

With Mill he believed that an individual member of society can indulge in vice without doing harm to others. He wrote: "If their natural infirmity is to prompt them to hurt themselves only—if they cannot help indulging in vice, they deserve pity for their misfortune, which it would be a baseness and cruelty to aggravate by the addition of social persecution."^{*} He came to the conclusion: "Coercion will never do. The enforced

* The life of the writer affords an excellent refutation of this theory about "self-regarding" action. No individual can, indeed, do

abstinence from personal vices during the prevalence of Puritanism in England naturally resulted in the excesses of the Restoration; and similar antecedents will always and everywhere be followed by similar consequences.”*

Asutosh was a democrat but he would not have liked the type of State Socialism, which is now practised by democratic England. He apprehended that if socialistic opinions be superadded to the democratic feeling, the majority might come to regard the possession of more than a limited amount of property as infamous. Curiously enough he was a believer in the theory of legislative interference for effecting social improvement, as is evident from his conception of Law as ‘the mighty engine of social improvement.’ He held that whatever might be the object of the law-maker, “he must be thoroughly conversant with the nature of the means employed, in order to be sure of achieving those ends. Jurisprudence is the science which professes to give him the requisite instructions.”³⁶

He believed that the existing systems of law were defective inasmuch as these hold a man liable without reference to the mental quality of his actions and without reference to culpable intention or inadvertence. He proves his theory by the following arguments: “If people were to be punished for acts and forbearances, which they neither knew, nor might have known, to be violations of some duty cast upon them by the law, they would be punished not according to law, but apart from and quite independently of law. A law is a

harm to himself without injuring the larger interests of Society. The writer took to drinking, and, it is said, he died a premature death owing to this evil habit. During the period which we are treating, he was the only writer who showed signs of developing into an original thinker in political philosophy. His drinking habit certainly injured Society by cutting off one of the most brilliant students of political science from the world at an early age. This remark, I admit with great regret, is extremely uncharitable ; but my admiration for the writings of Asutosh has compelled me to make it.

* This statement might be an attack on Keshabchandra Sen's ideal of puritanism. Which was preached and enforced among his own followers about the time of the writing of this essay.

command. A command is a wish, expressed by an intelligent being, to an intelligent being, that the latter should do or abstain from something, some evil being held out as an inducement to compliance with the wish. Now the inducement cannot operate unless the party commanded, knows, or may know, if he attends or adverts as he ought, that what he is going to do or omit, would be a non-compliance with the wish of his superior. Without intention or inadvertence, therefore, there cannot be any legal liability. True, no existing system of law realises completely this pure idea of liability; but, so far as it fails to do so, it does not deserve the name of law."³⁷

He does not seem to have been much in favour of judge-made law, as its flexibility is, according to him, only a euphemism for variability, alterability and uncertainty. He preferred the legal system prevailing on the Continent, because, "hard cases would seldom make bad law under the continental system."³⁸ He complained that the sense in which the British Indian Courts are called Courts of Equity as well as of Law has not been defined. "Neither the Privy Council, nor any Act of the Governor-General of India in Council has up to this time declared what is the precise nature of the equity, which these courts are bound to administer." He further shows the difference between the Roman, English and the so-called system of Indian Equity. "The Indian judge is directed to draw up 'justice, equity and good conscience' only when the existing law, however harsh, immoral or unjust its provisions may be, fails him, whereas the English Chancellor and the Roman praetor built up their complicated systems of equity avowedly with the views of redressing the harshness, immorality or injustice of the existing law."³⁹

Asutosh was one of the earliest critics of Austin's theory of sovereignty. Barker and Laski have given some prominence to the argument that the state is not sovereign because there are always things which the state cannot do owing to the opposition from some part of the community over which it claims sovereignty. Asutosh hinted at this type of argument long before these two writers. In criticising Austin's definition of sovereignty he wrote: "But what is the least number of men that will satisfy the definition? What is the least fraction of that number that may be reckoned as its bulk? How long and

how often is obedience to be rendered in order that it may be habitual? It is impossible to give precise answers to these questions. Austin's discussion of them is only a reiteration in various forms of this impossibility."⁴⁰ We admit the validity of the last two questions; but as regards the first question, it may be pointed out that Austin stated that the determinate human superior is not to be in a habit of obedience to a like superior. It is difficult for a very small community to maintain its independence against others; this consideration should define, though not exactly, the least number of men that will satisfy Austin's definition.

V. Monomohan Ghosh and Lalmohan Ghosh
(1844-1896; 1849-1909)

Monomohan and Lalmohan were the two gifted sons of Ramlochan Ghosh, an intimate friend of Raja Rammohun Roy.⁴¹ Both the brothers sat for the Indian Civil Service Examination, but both of them failed to secure admission into the Service. Monomohan went to England for the first time in March 1862 and Lalmohan in June 1866. Both of them attained fame as Barristers in the Calcutta High Court. The former wrote a book entitled, "The Open Competition for the Civil Service of India" and it was published by Triubner & Co. in 1866. In it he protested against the reduction of marks in Oriental subjects prescribed for the I. C. S. Examination. Monomohan was one of the promoters of the Indian Association. In pursuance of the idea of Raja Rammohun Roy, he pressed for the separation of the Executive from the Judiciary, and published in 1884 a book entitled "Desirability of separating Judicial from Executive and Police functions of Magistrates in India." In 1885 he visited England for the second time and taking advantage of his sojourn in England the Indian Association asked him to act as a delegate of Bengal and to represent Indian grievances to the British public. Ramgopal Sanyal, who came in intimate contact with him gives the following account of his political ideas: "As regards his political ideas, he has a firm faith in the justice and honesty of British rules, but the Anglo-Indian idea of excluding the people from offices of great trust and responsibility is a mistake. In course of time, Mr. Ghosh

expects that the Indian constitution will be analogous to that of the colonies."⁴²

In 1866 Monomohan Ghosh wrote his book "The open competition for the Civil Service of India." He pointed out several glaring defects in the system of examination of I. C. S. candidates and pleaded for limiting the choice of subjects to six only. Later on he produced a masterly treatise on the Separation of Judiciary from the Executive. He supported his contention with a wealth of illustrations from actual cases of injustice. He was quoted by all who had to write or speak on the subject.

His brother, Lalmohan, went to England in 1879 and in association with David Wedderburn, Hodgson Pratt and F. W. Chesson, led a deputation to Lord Hartington in July, 1880. The deputation prayed for the repeal of the Press Act and of the Arms Act and asked for raising the age limit of the Indian Civil Service. It laid the greatest emphasis on the necessity of conceding representative legislature to India. The Memorial, penned by Lalmohan Ghosh, stated: "We believe the time has arrived, when an experiment may be safely made in this direction by admitting elected representative members to the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, in a certain proportion to the nominated members. At present each Local Government nominates two or three Indians to serve as members of the Council, who are often officials, and, with a few exceptions, generally selected more on account of their rank and wealth than for their fitness and capacity.* Although some of these members have, from time to time, rendered useful service to the State, it is obvious that, so long as all the members are nominated by

* To illustrate the truth of this remark it may be mentioned that in the Governor-General's Council the only Indian members were Nawab of Rampore, Maharaja of Burdwan, Raja Sahib Dyal Bahadoor and Maharaja of Vizianagram in 1864. The first and last mentioned noblemen delivered one short speech each during the whole period of their membership; while the Maharaja of Burdwan, though retaining his seat in 1864, 1865 and 1866, did not open his mouth at all. See Abstract and Proceedings of the Governor-General's Council, 1854-66.

the Government, however carefully the selection may be made, the Native members, who are so appointed cannot feel, or be credited with, that independence which it is essential they should enjoy, nor can their opinion possess the weight and authority, which belong to the voice of representatives elected by the people." The Memorial pointed out that by introducing representative system in Indian and Provincial Legislatures the Government would be able to ascertain the real wants and opinions of the people, and that it would be able to secure for its legislative and fiscal measures the sanction and support of public opinion in India. In a speech, delivered by Lalmohan at Willis' Rooms, London, on July 23, 1879, an appeal was made to the constitutional principles of England in the following words: "Nor can England, without being utterly false to all her traditions, to her history, and to herself, continue to refuse to us that boon of a constitutional government which it is the proudest boast and the greatest glory of this country to possess."

The concrete proposal of the Deputation referred to above was that towns enjoying municipal self-government should be formed into constituencies for electing members to the Provincial Legislatures. The number of members, so elected, should bear a certain proportion to the members nominated by the Government. As regards the constitution of the Indian Legislature, the Deputation proposed: "We would also recommend the introduction of the principle of representation within similar limits as regards the constitution of the Supreme Legislative Council, so that a certain proportion of

The following list of members of the Bengal Legislative Council will also partially illustrate the truth of the remark :—

1879. Ameer Ali, Moulavi Ameer Hossein, Raja Pramathanath Roy, Mohanimohan Roy and Kristodas Pal.

1880. Dyed Moulavi Ameer Hossein, Mohinimohan Roy (later on replaced by the Maharaja of Darbhanga), Kristodas Pal and Pearymohan Mukherjee.

1881. Pearymohan Mookherjee, Kristodas Pal and Ameer Ali.

1882. Maharaja of Darbhanga, Kristodas Pal, Bhudev Mukherjee, Mahomed Yusuf and Harbuns Sahai.

See Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council.

its members may be elected representatives of the different presidencies."⁴³ Mr. W. A. J. Archbold, in his *Outlines of Indian Constitutional History* remarks that "About 1888 discussion began with a view to enlarging the possibility of Indian advice and criticism and to the introduction of the elective system."⁴⁴ But the Memorial discussed above shows clearly that the Bengal public first demanded the enlargement of the Councils as early as 1880. It is to be noticed that the Councils Act of 1892, 55 and 56 Vic., C. 14, virtually granted representation to the Municipalities in the Provincial Councils and allowed members of the Provincial Legislatures to send their representatives to the Supreme Council, as prayed for in the Memorial.*

VI. Jogendranath Vidyabhusan (1845-1904)

Jogendranath Vidyabhusan took his M. A. degree from the Sanskrit College and entered Government service as a Munsif. But he resigned his post and adopted journalism as a profession. The influence of his education in the Sanskrit College is reflected in his Sanskritized Bengal style only, otherwise, in radicalism of views he surpasses even the Philosophical Radicals of the old Hindu College. By quoting Charvaka, he tried to prove the fraudulent character of the ancient Brahmins.⁴⁵ He believed Positivism to be the coming Religion of the world.⁴⁶ He advocated free love and denied the necessity of marriage. Like Judge Lindsay of the U. S. A. he thought that the lovers should be allowed to separate of their own accord without going through the formality of divorce. He held that love can never be everlasting and that real love is possible only where both the parties are independent.⁴⁷ He went further than Mill and Bankim in condemning hereditary succession, which he held responsible for the existence of drones, intemperance and prostitution.⁴⁸ As regards political

* This is but one of the many instances of the response of law to Public Opinion in India. But this side of constitutional history of British India has been totally neglected in all the works (by eminent men like Cowell, Ilbert and Archbold) on the subject.

agitation, he drew the attention of the Bengali people to the examples of Mazzini and Garibaldi.⁴⁹

He investigated the origin of the state in India. He held that when the Aryans first came to India they defeated the aborigines and conquered their lands, which were then divided among the heads of different Aryan families. The head of each family tried to increase the number of his dependents with a view to strengthening his power, and exercised the most absolute authority over them. This gave rise to the Patriarchal Government (he translates it as *Parijana-tantra*).⁵⁰ The family consisted of uncles, brothers, numerous wives taken from all the *varnas*, eight different kinds of sons, disciples and slaves. It was huge in size, and discipline was maintained in it only by the iron will of the patriarch, who could sell or make a gift of his sons and daughters.⁵¹ Three things, according to Jogendranath, held the family together. These were fear of the aborigines, holding of property jointly by all the members,⁵² and the necessity of keeping the sacrificial fire always burning. Later on, the patriarchal family developed into the village community. Then the writer sets himself to the solution of the problem as to why feudalism came into existence in Europe, while village communities were developed in ancient India. The solution he offers is this: the Teutonic conquerors of the Roman provinces were less civilized than the conquered, and hence they accepted many laws and customs of Rome. Out of this mixture of Roman and Teutonic customs arose feudalism. But in India the conquering Aryans were superior in civilization to the conquered aborigines. So their customs remained unaffected. Moreover, the law of primogeniture prevailed in Mediaeval Europe, while in India there was the law of equal division of property amongst all the sons. Hence, in Europe there was a good deal of inequality, which gave rise to constitutional struggles and ultimately paved the way for democracy. But in India the calm and squalid life in village communities was undisturbed by any such struggle and so it bred inglorious indifferentism and fatalism. These circumstances led to the rise of despotism. By the time when the *Manu Samhita* was written, despotism had become the normal form of government and the village communities had decayed.⁵³

In 1880, he wrote an article entitled "Who gave power to Government?" He answers the question by asserting that the people have given power to government, that sovereignty lies with the people and that government is nothing but the representative of the people.⁵⁴

Jogendranath was a strong advocate of equality. He held the inequality of caste, of wealth and of sex, along with difference in language, dress, and government system responsible for the present degeneration of India. This can be remedied only by promoting equality, which in its turn will give unity. But before one could expect India to be united, Indians must first of all learn the lesson of nationalism under a strong foreign government. Otherwise, even if the British Government graciously concede independence to Indians, they would be brought under the iron heels of the Raja of Nepal or of the Sindhia. So, under the shelter of a powerful foreign government efforts should be made to uproot the very principle of monarchy, to equalize the high with the low and prepare the ground for sowing the seed of republicanism in India.⁵⁵

Early in 1875 he wrote an article on "Unity of India." At that time the talk about founding an all-India political association of the educated middle classes was in the air. Jogendranath proposed that such an association should be formed and like the Oriental Congress it should hold its annual sittings in different places like Calcutta, Allahabad, Lahore, Bombay, Madras and Lucknow. It should agitate on questions relating to the improvement of different province and communities and send Memorials to the Government from time to time. The Government would certainly accept the opinion of such a body as public opinion.⁵⁶ He proposed in 1879 that Hindi should be the *lingua franca* of India.⁵⁷ About that time Swami Dayananda, whose mother-tongue was Gujrati, was also trying to make Hindi the common language of India.

VII. Chandranath Bose

(1844-1910)

Chandranath Bose was the first student of the Calcutta University who secured a first class in the M. A. Examination

in History. Having taken his M. A. degree in 1866, he secured the post of the Translator of the Calcutta High Court. He played a prominent part in the revival of Hinduism. He explained the spiritual and cultural significance of Hinduism in his Bengali work entitled *Hindutva*. He was a friend and literary disciple of Bankimchandra and acquired great renown as a thoughtful writer of Bengali books on culture, civilization and literary criticism.

The importance of Chandranath Bose in the history of political thought of Bengal lies in the fact that he was the first to draw the attention of the public to the necessity of encouraging Indian manufacturers. He emphasised the duty of the Government to encourage Indian industries and explained the political significance of industrial development of India in a paper on the "Present social and economical condition of Bengal and its probable future" which was read before the Social Science Association on the 21st of January, 1869.

We have shown before that almost all the political thinkers of Bengal devoted their attention to the problem of the function of government in relation to education. But none of them stated so frankly and emphatically the political significance of mass education in India as did Chandranath in the paper referred to above. He said that education of the masses would promote a communion of feeling and sentiment between the classes and the masses. He further stated: "An enlightened sense of material suffering will excite mutual sympathy amongst our peasants and a constant and extensive interchange of thoughts and feelings, which when educated, they would be able to maintain amongst themselves, will raise upon the basis of that sympathy, a spirit of combination which, by removing that individual or rather, family segregation, which forms a marked characteristic of agricultural life in Bengal, will effect important changes in the economy of agriculture, and succeed, by the force of a resulting opinion, in establishing satisfactory relations between the agriculturist on the one hand, and the landlord and the capitalist on the other".

He was not a believer in the *Laissez-faire* theory of government. He believed that Indian industries could be

developed only by the active sympathy of the Government. He appealed to the moral sense of the British Indian Government in order to secure its encouragement for Bengal industries. He explained that probable advantages of developing manufactures in Bengal would be seen in four directions. First, "it will open a field of labour, which will invite a large amount of capital, which now either remains idle or is spent most unproductively." Secondly, the wealthy manufacturers would improve the condition of the peasants by introducing new and scientific machines for agriculture, and would undertake their education with a view to teaching them the use of such implements. Thirdly, it would open new fields for employment of the ever-increasing number of educated persons. Fourthly, it would promote better relations between England and Bengal. This point deserves to be quoted in his own words: "She (India) is yet only a hewer of wood and drawer of water for English civilisation in the East. But once let manufacturers be established in Bengal, let Bengal once know that the cloth which she wears, the paper on which she writes, and the knife with which she cuts will be no longer prepared for her by England, and she will perceive the necessity of looking beyond the resources of her own art and skill, she will be forced to study the progress of modern art and science, to consult the whole of Europe on the methods of manufacturing industry, to examine Nature with a minute and scrutinising eye. When Bengal becomes a country of manufacturers, she will begin to think and to act; then will she rise in the esteem of civilised Europe; then, for the first time in her history, will she acquire a position of dignity and importance in the great commonwealth of nations. Then chiefly, will Bengal find it necessary to cultivate the acquaintance she has formed with England—the great mistress of the commercial world. Then will England herself form with her a friendship more close, more intellectual than subsists at present, and then will that friendship be placed on that basis of mutual esteem and respect, without which friendship is a serious misnomer." This might be called the birthcry of Swadeshism in Bengal. The note he sounded here was taken up four years later by Bholanath Chandra, a man belonging to the traditional manufacturing and trading class of Bengal.

VIII. Bholanath Chandra

(1822-1910)

The fatherhood of the Swadeshi movement, in its purely economic significance may safely be attributed, I think, to Bholanath Chandra. He was a chip of the old block—a student of the Hindu College, which institution he entered in 1832 and left in 1842. He was a friend of Michael Madhusudan Datta, Kishorichand Mitra, Anandakrishna Bose, Bhudev Mukhopadhyay and Gourdas Bysak. S. J. Manmathanath Ghosh has written an excellent biography of this brilliant writer and eminent scholar. In 1873-74 he contributed a series of articles on commerce and manufactures of India in the *Mookerjee's Magazine*. In these articles he discussed the past history, present condition and future possibilities of Indian commerce and manufacture. We are, however, concerned with his articles on the present and future of Indian manufactures and commerce only.

Bholanath Chandra observes that the condition of Indian manufactures "has never been broached in Native literature, never been treated of in any Native Magazine."⁵⁸ He takes the Indian-managed Press to task for neglecting this important public question and in his exhortation to them on their duty in this respect laid the foundation of economic Swadeshism. He writes : "The Native English vernacular papers should preach for the founding of independent Native Banks, Native Companies and Corporations, Native Mills and Factories, and Native Chambers of Commerce in the Presidencies. They should denounce the insensate practice of preferring foreign goods to home-made manufactures. They should inculcate the discipline of self-denial, and the cultivation of patriotic sentiments. They should collect and compile details of Indian urban life, to draw public attention to the helpless condition of our weavers, blacksmiths and mechanics. They should point out the enormous and unceasing drain upon the profits of Indian labour, to show that the country is growing poorer year by year, and thoroughly expose the statistical delusion of the authorities. They should sedulously strive for the subversion of the policy, which in addition to our political slavery has steeped the country also in an industrial slavery."⁵⁹ He went to the extreme length of denouncing

foreign capital for the development of Indian Industries. He wrote : "I want no foreign capital to resort to India ; her own capital should be created. I want no foreign imports which she can manufacture herself at home."⁶⁰

Bholanath's economic doctrine is an extreme and crude type of Mercantilism. He wrote : "The richest country is that which has to sell everything to others, and buy nothing from them. Such once was the economic position which India occupied."⁶¹ "The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea" at least conveys a different impression.

Bholanath pleaded for the legislative protection of infant industries of India and asked the Government to revise the tariff in such a way as to afford the Indian industries protection against foreign competition.⁶² He denounced the *Laissez-faire* theory of Government in the following words : "To Government, I have to represent that its functions are not merely negative and restrictive, but positive and active. Its duty is not simply to protect our life, liberty and property and act the part of a policeman. The doctrine of 'administrative nihilism' as well as the doctrine of the 'divine right of monarchs' are now numbered with fallacies and patriarchal theories. In the code of modern politics, the state is said to exist for its people—to be bound to render them every active help in its power, and remove every evil by legislation, and promote all possible good by necessary institutions and projects."⁶³ Having thus laid the theoretical basis of his appeal for protection, indicates his plan of the actual measures which Government should take in order to promote Indian industries. He claims : "It is bound to do away with our cooly emigration to the West Indies and Mauritius, in order to enable us to re-establish our own sugar trade. It is bound to

* The extremist tendency of his writings was condemned by Kissen Mohan Mullick, an eminent man of business, then a septuagenarian, who wrote: "Let us act prudently and in harmony with those under whose rule and protection it has pleased Providence to place us, and we shall not fail to prosper and be happy. But it is to be pitied that talking at random against power and policy is becoming a chronic disorder with the more enlightened of our present generation."—*Mookherjee Magazin*, 1873, p. 210.

make treaties in our favour with Siam and other foreign powers. It is bound to maintain an independent commercial policy in the true interest of India, It is bound to consult Native opinion and admit a Native representative of commerce in the Legislative Council. In short it is bound to govern India upon the principle of European equity and equality."⁶⁴ Further, he demanded that the Government should give practical education, to teach the people to build ships, to navigate the ocean, and to carry the merchandise of their country into Europe and America.⁶⁵

CHAPTER VI

CRITICS OF LIBERAL THOUGHT (1861-1884)

I. Introduction

Liberalism in Europe as well as in India, in the period between 1815 and 1884, aimed at securing democratic and popular control over government; and in countries like Italy, Ireland, Poland and India, where government was in the hands of foreigners, Liberalism necessarily implied Nationalism. In the earlier chapters we have shown that those who were in favour of the democratic form of government were invariably the champions of Nationalism. But the reverse is not true; some of the advocates of Nationalism like Nabagopal Mitra, Akshaychandra Sircar and Bhudev Mukhopadhyay were severe critics of democracy. Their hostility to democratic movement sprang from a clear grasp of the reality of the situation of India. They might be termed Realists, who in consideration of the trend of Indian history, of the widespread ignorance of the masses in India, and of the apparent want of success of democracy in the West, opposed the Liberal School of Bengal. We shall discuss the ideas of Akshaychandra Sircar and Nabagopal Mitra, two representatives of the Realistic school of critics of Liberal thought movement in this chapter. This school of thought was also represented by two other men, who stood head and shoulders above their contemporaries in intellectual equipment. These are Raja Rajendralal Mitra and Jogendrachandra Ghosh. Rajendralal was a class-friend of Bhudev and Michael Madhusudan in the Hindu College.¹

Rajendralal entertained a lively suspicion of the irrational type of patriotism, which in the seventies of the last century, moved the heart of many in Bengal. In a meeting, held in the

Town Hall on the 2nd July, 1870, Rajendralal declared to an audience of two hundred men:—"If patriotism means an insensate love of everything that is ours, whether good or bad, away with such patriotism. If it is to teach us to rest satisfied with our *Lares and Penates*, our language and our civilisation, as they now stand the less we have of it, the better."² From the time of the publication of the "Tattvabodhini Patrika" to that of the "Bangadarshan" an incessant demand had been made for the larger use of the Bengali language for educational and social purposes. Rajendralal, who himself edited a very useful Bengali magazine entitled the "Bibidhartha Samgraha", however, said that in Poland the Polish language is a symbol of unity of the people and as such is worth fighting for, in India "our vernaculars, on the other hand are poor and undeveloped, and serve only to divide and disunite us."³

Jogendrachandra Ghosh (1842-1901), an intimate friend of the poet Hemchandra Banerjee, was also a critic of democracy. His standpoint is that the organisation of Hindu society is such that it emphasises duties only and not rights. "The sovereign, the Brahmana, the Purohita, the Zamindar, the Ryot, the Karta, the husband, the wife, the father, the son, each has his duties carefully defined, and in each case the least default is counted as at once a crime towards the community and a sin to the gods." Fulfilment of duty by every member of the community and implicit obedience shown to the responsible authorities, meet all the requirements of society. Democracy, which emphasises rights and not duties would thus be unsuited to the social organisation in India. His criticism of western democracy, as he understood it to be, deserves to be quoted at length. He wrote :—"To many people it appears to be a self-evident truth, that the opinion of the majority ought to prevail. But after all, it must have cost Europe a long process of development to arrive at the fundamental principle of modern democracy, that opinion should ultimately be expressed in the form of yea or nay to an appropriately framed question and that the decision of a collective body should be determined by the preponderance of votes thus declared and numbered. I do not know if the solution does not signify a sort of compromise with the well-known but dangerous alternative, *viz.*, appeal to arms, but

there can hardly be any doubt, in spite of the support given to the doctrine by the now all-important school of Utilitarians, that the numeric strength of advocates is an index neither to logical nor to ethical soundness. If a poll could be taken of the whole human race most of the scientific doctrines of the day would have large majorities arrayed against them; and as for the utilitarian doctrine which regards the happiness of any two outsiders as preferable to that of a single person, such as one's own father, mother, wife or son, the ethical value of it is certainly not patent to primitive people, like the writer, to say nothing of the further equipment of modern democratic society, the education of public opinion by means of stump oratory, special pleading, forensic strategy, banter, bullying and newspaper agitation. Whatever, therefore, the history and worth may be of the doctrine that the claims and opinions of the majority shall prevail, one need not stand aghast at being told that unanimity has been the rule of conduct in Hindu society.⁴

While Rajendralal, Jogendrachandra, Nabagopal and Akshaychandra opposed the Liberal thought movement on philosophical and historical grounds, men were not wanting to pour ridicule and satire on the pioneers of Liberal movement in Bengal. The best specimen of such a type of criticism is a satirical poem called the "*Bharat-Uddhar Kavya*." The writer thinks that the grievances, on which the Liberals agitated, were mostly imaginary. As an example of these imaginary grievances he states that the Liberals think that the extension of railway is nothing but the symbol of the bondage of India in iron chains and therefore extremely insulting to the nation.⁵ He thinks that the demand for democratic and national control of government proceeds only from the unemployment of the educated youths, as these people in their misery believe that a national government would at once solve the problem of unemployment.*

Another critic, Sambhoochandra Mookerjee, the famous editor of the 'Mookerjee's Magazine' and 'Reis and Rayyet'⁶

* We do not object to the Russian rule if we get two square meals a day; if the Yavanas give us food we will welcome them; or let India be free, we will take to looting.

based his criticism of Liberalism on the psychology of the masses in India. He wrote :—"The idea of a constitution is incomprehensible to many. I have myself failed with hundreds to make them understand clearly a republic, and a federal republic has puzzled more. My statements have been more or less openly disbelieved; the more pedantic have declared that I was talking of schemes for governing with which philosophers had amused themselves; and the intelligent and shrewd have always hinted that there must be a king lurking somewhere in those fantastical states. A government without a king seems to (them) such a contradiction."⁷ Again, he speaks of the monarchical tradition of India : "We do not understand a government without a king, having never before been acquainted with such."⁸

He then shows how loyalty is a deep-rooted sentiment with the people of India.⁹ Their loyalty demands the existence of a monarch, who should come in such personal contact with the people as to evoke the highest kind of loyalty. "The highest loyalty, that which is very different from the allegiance of calculation or expediency, is attachment, for the person of the sovereign in constitutional or republican countries to the machinery of the supreme national power. While our people are not politically advanced enough for attachment to a machinery, their sovereign and the supreme machinery both have their home far from our shores."¹⁰

Another critic of Liberalism, belonging to the loyalist school, was Raja Saurindramohan Tagore, a great master of Indian music. He wrote a learned book, entitled "Hindu Loyalty" and published it in 1883. In it he showed from appropriate texts from the Manu Samhita, Mahabharata, Ramayana, Brahmavaivarta Purana, Kamandakiya Nitisara and Kalika Purana that loyalty is one of the highest virtues. He proposed that loyalty should be taught to the children in schools and that they should sing a Bengali version, rendered and set to music by himself, of "God save the Queen" anthem. He preached the divinity of kingship and the necessity of passive obedience on the part of the subjects. He wrote :—"Should a king through ignorance or anger do a wrong to his subjects, it behoves them to overlook it, and they should never do wrong to the king."¹¹ Towards the end of his book

he wrote :—"Those who have the slightest regard for our sacred and time-honoured Shastras, will consider it a sin of the deepest dye to treat kings with disregard, and will consider it their bounden duty to obey the prince in all parts. Now when our Gracious Queen Empress Victoria has been placed by Heaven on the throne, and when she has inherited the divine sceptre, who can deny that there is divinity in Her?"

Besides the Realist and Loyalist schools of critics of Liberalism, there was a very powerful group of opponents of democracy, who transformed the British Indian Association into an organisation of Zamindars alone. After the death of Harishchandra Mukherjee in 1861, Digambar Mitra and Kristodas Pal gradually became the most active and prominent members of the British Indian Association. We shall discuss their political ideas in some detail in this chapter. Bhudev Mukhopadhyay belongs to this period, but as his "Samajik Prabandha" and "Bibidha Prabandha," which contain his political theories were published in 1892 and 1904, we cannot include his political thought in this volume.

II. Nabagopal Mitra

Nabagopal Mitra made the world 'National' popular amongst the educated classes in Bengal. He was one of the founders of the 'Hindu Mela' and the 'National Society' and the editor of the 'National Paper.' He was so very fond of the term 'National' that his friends nicknamed him as 'National Nabagopal.' In the sixties of the nineteenth century Italy and Germany made heroic attempts to achieve national unity; the ideal of nationalism gained ground amongst the 'subject nationalities' within the Austrian, Russian and Ottoman empires; and Napoleon III championed the cause of nationalism in Italy, Poland and Rumania. The European movement was bound to have its repercussion in India. Nabagopal Mitra made himself the mouthpiece of the vague yearning of the educated youths for nationalism.

Nabagopal belonged to the Brahmo Samaj, which in spite of all its divisions, retained throughout the nineteenth century the impress of the moderate political views of Raja Rammohun Roy. Being a member of the Brahmo Samaj, Nabagopal could

keep his exuberant zeal for nationalism within constitutional limits. His political ideas contain very little that is new or original, but their significance lies in the fact that they reveal the views of certain section of the middle classes, who did not share the opinions of Dwarkanath Vidyabhushan and Sisirkumar Ghosh.

Nabagopal holds that the chief criterion of nationalism is unity. This unity, according to him, is brought about, sustained and promoted in different peoples by different means and on different principles. The principle which promoted nationalism amongst the Greeks was love of the country, amongst the Jews the Mosaic Law, amongst the Romans the love of liberty and renown and amongst the English the love of liberty.* He maintains that the basis of national unity in India has been Hindu religion. "Hindu nationality is not confined to Bengal. It embraces all of Hindu name and Hindu faith throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan; neither geographical position, nor the language is counted a disability. The Hindus are destined to be a religious nation." He places so much reliance on the Hindu religion as the means of promoting nationalism, because he thinks that the efficacy of the Hindu religion 'in knitting individuals into communities and communities into a nation is remarkable.' He cites the examples of the Marhattas and the Sikhs to show how under the inspiration of religion these two peoples attained unity.¹²

While other political thinkers of Bengal were busy in devising schemes for establishing a democratic constitution in India, Nabagopal boldly put forward the theory that monarchy is best suited to the circumstances in India. He thought that India was being governed by an obligarchy of White men, who formed an infinitesimal minority in the vast Indian population. He held that the rule of one enlightened despot was far more preferable to that sort of oligarchical government. "The doctrine of the Divine Right of classes or nations is as absurd and monstrous as the other dogma (the

* This view reveals the superficial nature of studies of the writer. The Greeks were never formed into a nation, the principle of nationalism never entered the mind of the Romans, and the Jews can hardly be called a nation at any period of their history.

Divine Right of kings). Both demand obedience as a dispensation of the Deity and "not as a return for services rendered." But if we are to make a choice between two evils, one master is better than many, and surely one single despot is more consistent than a large number of men, refusing to be tyrannised over, but setting up themselves as irresponsible masters over a far greater number.[†] Having thus established the superiority of autocracy over oligarchy, he turns to the discussion of the respective merits of autocracy and democracy. He holds that ideally the best form of government is representative government, and it should be adopted wherever there are no serious practical difficulties. But along with John Stuart Mill, he contends that there are serious practical difficulties in the way of establishing representative government in India. The masses are not educated, there is no spring of spontaneous improvement in the people themselves, and there is the lack of solidarity amongst the different classes. So he concludes that despotism is more suited to the condition of India than representative government. But while Mill pleaded for the despotism of a trading corporation for India, Nabagopal wanted an Indian despot.

Nabagopal did not subscribe to the Spencerian ideal of Individualism. He was not satisfied with the mere negative functions of government, which only prevents the spoliation of life and property of the subjects; like Aristotle he held the promotion of moral life of the citizens to be the chief function of the government. "The first duty of government is the establishment of order but that accomplished, there remain other duties to be discharged. It is not sufficient that there is safety of life and limb, that men can toil and get riches without danger or hindrance." The government must promote noble life.¹³

As there was very little chance of India's attaining the status of a national state and of electing a dictator in the near future, Nabagopal demanded that a "beginning should be

[†] Cf. Mill: "It is not certain that the despotism of twenty millions (of English people) is necessarily better than that of a few, or of one". —Representative Government, Ch. XVIII.

made, however small and infinitesimal towards real and tangible self-government." He suggested two means for improving the machinery of government of India. First, that some Indian representatives should be included in the British Parliament. He cited the example of the French National Assembly, which in 1872 included representatives from the French colonies and dependencies. It might be objected that the population of India is so vast that its representatives might swamp the British Parliament. He answered that objection in the following manner : "We can only point out that the masses have not as yet acquired the intelligence necessary for self-government. The electoral franchise might be limited in the first instance to the largest towns and be gradually extended to the rural population." The possession of wealth or education or both might be made the basis of electoral franchise.¹⁴ The beginning of self-government should also be made, according to him, in the municipalities. He held that the system of election should be introduced in the Calcutta Municipality, as the Justices did not represent anybody but themselves. "The elective franchise should be unreserved; the inhabitants of Calcutta are capable of using that franchise to their advantage and they ought to have it. Election ought to be periodical so as to allow the people and their representatives the opportunities of consulting one another's feeling and views. The Government ought to return some members on its behalf and the rate-payers the rest."¹⁵

Nabagopal opposed along with the members of the British Indian Association the policy of educating the masses. As an abstract principle, he admitted that the duty of educating the masses and thereby bettering their condition is of the highest importance to Government. But he held that in consideration of the economic condition of the country, the imparting of elementary education to the masses at the sacrifice of the interests of higher education, will be highly inexpedient. Such an education would create in the peasantry a distaste for agriculture. Moreover, "it will open their eyes to their miserable condition without giving them any means to better their condition." So he advised the Government first to remove the poverty of the masses and then to bestow education on them. While thus asking the Government alone to shoulder the responsibility of improving the economic

condition of the peasants, Nabagopal with a total disregard for consistency asked his countrymen not to depend too much upon Government. "The greatest lesson now to be taught is self-reliance. Let the people learn this and the path of every reformation will be clear. The only task then left to the Government would be to encourage every attempt at reform; the initiation of every good movement being left to the people themselves—the movement for giving popular education not excepted."¹⁶ The sum and substance of this sermon seems to be that the Government should not divert a farthing from the sum, devoted to the promotion of education of the middle class, to elementary education, that the masses should try to educate themselves as best they can, but at the same time the Government alone ought to undertake the impossible task of removing the poverty of an ignorant peasantry.

Indianisation of services has been the cry of the educated Indians since the time of Raja Rammohun Roy; Nabagopal also joined the chorus in demanding the appointment of Indians to high posts. He held that it would not be safe on political grounds to exclude the most talented and meritorious men from Government service. These capable and highly intelligent men, being excluded from higher posts, might create disaffection towards the Government. But at the same time Nabagopal, with outrageous frankness, blurted out that "to speak the truth, we think the bulk of the people would much rather be governed by a Thomas Brown, with all his haughtiness and impetuosity at times leading to violence, than by the highly educated, mild and affable Native Christian, or by the most placid non-conformist Hindoo, or even by the most honest and upright, most anglicised Hindoo."¹⁷

III. Akshaychandra Sircar (1846-1917)

Akshaychandra Sircar is now remembered in Bengal as a great literary critic. He was a friend and disciple of Bankimchandra and his political opinions were much influenced by the writings of the latter. Like Bankimchandra he too held that the current political agitation was nothing but begging and crying.¹⁸ From Bankimchandra he seems to have learnt that society is much more important for the

development of individual character than government. But while Bankimchandra was actuated by the motive of establishing a national state with the help of the aggregate politico-religious forces of the community, Akshaychandra appears chiefly in the role of a constitutional legalist.

The seventh decade of the nineteenth century witnessed the growth of an intensely critical attitude towards the Government in India. While his contemporaries were racking their brains to find fault with the Government, Akshaychandra devoted his attention to a philosophical examination of the basis of the demands of political agitators. He saw the necessity of drawing the attention of his countrymen to the reality of political situation. He was of opinion that the training which was necessary for achieving self-government has been lacking in India; and so long as the community is not actually prepared for assuming responsibility of government, we should utilise the facilities afforded by the British administration and must not provoke unnecessary hostility of the Government by harsh criticism. He pointed out the liberal character of the British Indian Government by drawing a comparison between it and the French Government at Chandernagore. There was no printing press, no newspaper and not even a school at Chadernagore. The French Government had sanctioned the establishment of a public library only on the condition that no debate would be held there. In British India, on the other hand, there was perfect liberty of expressing one's views and opinions.¹⁹

Akshaychandra was a lawyer and he applied his legal acumen to an examination of the bases of Indian political agitation. He found that there were four different schools of political thought amongst the agitators in India. The first school held the Permanent Settlement to be sacrosanct in character and appealed to it whenever the Government attempted to impose any new tax on income from land. The second school made the Education Despatch of 1854 and the Queen's Proclamation to be the basis of their demand for higher education and absolute equality in the eye of law. The third school held that as India is a part and parcel of the British Empire, all the provisions of the English constitution should be applicable to India and the rights which have been

secured by Englishmen by the constitutional struggle of seven hundred years are to be conceded to the Indian people. The fourth school held that the relation of the British Government to the Indian people is based on contract. According to them, the Bengali people headed by Raja Rajballav, Krishnachandra, Jagat Seth, Mirjafar and others handed over the Kingdom of Bengal to the English. So the rights which belonged to the subjects during the Muhammadan period must be maintained intact by the British Government. Akshaychandra pointed out the impracticability of all these claims in securing the rule of law for India. The basis of the rule of law is the parity of power between the government and the governed. Unless and until the people be powerful enough to command respect from the government there can be no constitutional government.²⁰

He attached very little importance to the form of government. He maintained that the progress of a community does not depend on the form of government. Even if the very best constitution be adopted by the people of India, it will fail to make the indolent industrious and the extravagant frugal, and to eradicate the social vices.²¹ The form of government is really the mirror of the progress of the community. If a form of government is not suited to the social conditions prevailing in a community, it cannot attain stability. If the form of government be far in advance of social progress, it will soon come down to the level of the condition of the community. It is useless, he maintains, to try to bring in social progress with the help of a particular form of government.²²

There was much talk about the rights of subjects in the seventies of the last century. Akshaychandra enunciated certain principles which should guide the people in demanding rights from the Government. There are three limits to the rights of subjects:—First, that the subjects have no right to demand anything which might prove detrimental to general welfare. No community can have any right to ask the King to abolish all laws and law-courts and to pray for the right of having unrestrained power of oppressing one another. Secondly, the subjects cannot demand anything which might prove dangerous to the King. Kingship has been instituted for the preservation of society, if kingship itself be endangered

who would protect the society? So we cannot demand the total abolition of the Indian Army, but we can demand the reduction of military expenditure. If the Government find it necessary to enact the Laws of Sedition for its own preservation, subjects cannot object to it. But the subjects can discuss whether the law is really necessary for the preservation of the Government. Thirdly, the subjects can have no right to interfere in that which does not affect the interests of the subjects in any way. As for example, if the Queen likes to change the place of her residence, the subjects can have no right to object to it. Except these three things, the subjects have rights in every other sphere of activity; and the Government is bound to concede these rights to the subjects.²³ Akshaychandra does not state whether the government or the subjects are to decide the harmfulness or otherwise of a measure. If the judgment of the government be taken as final, then the observance of these principles would mean the virtual denial of all the rights of the subjects. On the other hand, if the opinion of a group of subjects be accepted as the criterion of the utility or necessity of a measure, it would bring in confusion and ultimately lead to anarchy.

As a disciple of Bankimchandra, Akshaychandra holds that the government of a country can do very little in the way of effecting improvement in the condition of the citizens. This position is the logical outcome of the Individualist philosophy. He maintains that the science of politics is understood by those alone who have learnt to depend upon their own exertion for ameliorating their condition. When the Indian politicians were loudly protesting against the indifference of Government towards the development of Indian industries, Akshaychandra held that the people should try to improve their manufactures without looking up to government for help.²⁴

We have shown before how some of the popular writers on political questions took it for granted that all the elements of nationality were already present in India in the sixth and seventh decades of the nineteenth century. Akshaychandra subjected this notion to a critical examination. According to him there are four bonds of national unity—territory, religion, language and dress. Indian people live in a territory which

is sufficiently demarcated from other countries by natural boundaries; and the territorial integrity is maintained by the British Government and its army. In religion there is unity amidst apparent diversity. All the religious sects of India, excepting Islam, are but ramifications of one great moral principle. But the religion of the great moral principle. But the religion of the Muhammadans is a real stumbling block to the realisation of national unity in India. If uniformity of language and dress be criteria of national unity, India cannot claim to be a nation. So the sum and substance of Akshaychandra's disquisition on nationality is that many elements are lacking in the national unity of India.²⁵ In 1874 he could not detect the signs of that unity of interest and sentiment which has transformed the vast conglomeration of people of different races, languages, religions and dresses into a nation to-day.²⁶

IV. Digambar Mitra (1817-1877)

Digambar Mitra, a student of the Hindu College, began his career as a poor schoolmaster and ended it as a Raja, honoured by the Government and the people alike.²⁷ He became the Assistant Secretary of the British Indian Association in 1851 and gradually rose to the position of the President of the Association. Kristodas Pal, his life-long associate in the British Indian Association, wrote of him :— "While yet in his teens, he was thrown into the coterie of the illustrious Dwarkanath Tagore, which afterwards proved a nursery of the leading minds of Bengal....He learnt politics at the feet of Dwarkanath Tagore, he was a personal friend and coadjutor of both Prasannakoomar and Ramanath Tagore....His sympathies were republican and at the same time he did not care much for representative institutions in this country."²⁸

He was not only a shrewd politician and a successful man of business, but also a learned scholar. Anandakrishna Bose told Bholanath Chandra that as a student Digambar read, before the year 1838, Puffendorf's Law of Nations with Amritalal, the second son-in-law of Raja Radhakanta Deb Bahadur.²⁹

Like the disciples of Raja Rammohun, Digambar justly appreciated the great services rendered by the British Indian administration to India, and like them too, he agitated soberly for the redress of grievances, which the people and specially the Zamindars felt. In 1853 it was he who penned the famous Memorial to Parliament on behalf of the British Indian Association. In it he said :—"As subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, the Natives of this country entertain the deepest sentiments of loyalty and fidelity to Her Majesty, and sincerely desire the permanence of the British supremacy in India, which has ensured to them freedom from foreign incursions and intensive dissension's, and security from spoliation by lawless power." He expressed his gratefulness for the privileges conferred by the Charter Act of 1833, but at the same time complained of several important omissions in the Charter Act. At this favours Memorial reveals to us the political aspirations of Bengal in 1853, and as a comparison between it and the Charter Act of 1853 would show how far Law was responsive to public opinion, we make some lengthy quotations from it. Digambar wrote : "But no provision was made (in 1833) for introducing those benefits which the circumstances of India notoriously required; such as the relaxation of the pressure of the revenue system by lightening the land tax where it was variable, or erecting public works of utility, calculated to develop the resources of the country and promote the growth and increase of commerce and manufacture; the improvement of the selection of qualified officers, the appointment of proper ministerial officers, the abolition of stamps in law proceedings, and other salutary measures; the protection of life and property by the employment of a police adequate to the purpose in point of numbers and discipline, under the control of a proper number of experienced magistrates;—relief from the gigantic monopolies which the East India Company maintained very inconsistently with their position as rulers; the encouragement of the manufactures and commerce of the country, which had been greatly depressed in consequence of throwing open the trade with India; the education of the people on an adequate scale, for which the grant of a lac of rupees authorised by Parliament in 1813 was manifestly insufficient;....and the admission of the natives to a participation in those rights,

which are conceded by all constitutional governments, and which would qualify them to enjoy the benefit of free institutions at a future period." The Memorial prayed for reforms in the following matters :—(1) The Home Government; (2) The Government of India; (3) Relations of the Governor-General with Council; (4) The Legislative Council; (5) Laws made by the Executive; (6) Plan of the Legislative Council; (7) Powers of the Legislative Council and the Supreme Council; (8) Control of Parliament; (9) Declaration of non-interference with religion; (10) Local Governors; (11) Appeals from Governors; (12) Economy of Public Service; (13) Civil Service; (14) Judicial System; (15) Union of the Supreme and Sudder Courts; (16) Courts in the interior; (17) The Police and Magistracy; (18) Monopolies; (19) Revenue Officers; (20) Education; (21) Ecclesiastical Establishment.

Digambar believed like Raja Rammohun Roy that an aristocracy of wealth and intellect was most competent to carry on the administration of the country. So he pressed for reform in those directions, which would transfer power from a despotic government to an Indian aristocracy. He expressed his repugnance for autocracy in the following words :—"It was over a century that India had enjoyed the blessings of a constitutional rule, and it would be a wonder, as it would be a disappointment to all right-thinking men, if she did not feel some repugnance to the exhibition of uncontrolled arbitrary power, and if she was still to be dazzled with the gold and pageant of an autocratic court. In fact it could with truth be said, that the idea of an all powerful patriarchal rule, even if it were as benign in its influence as that of an Akbar, was as repulsive to her, as the doctrine that a king can do no wrong, was to an Englishman of the present day or the infallibility of the Pope to a Protestant."³⁰ Though he condemned autocracy, yet he was far from advocating democracy. He even went so far as to oppose the scheme of compulsory primary education, which alone can fit a nation for self-government. As a member of the Municipal Commission, he suggested in August 1861 that the six divisions of Calcutta should be represented by six men, of whom three should be chosen by the British Indian Association, and three by the Chamber of Commerce.* When a bill on Mofussil Municipalities was being discussed in the Bengal

Legislative Council on January 20, 1872, Digambar opposed the introduction of Municipal Self-Government in a very limited form, on the ground that "the country was neither politically, socially, morally or intellectually prepared for their reception." He further observed :— "Apart from other considerations, upon which he need not dwell, he would only observe that the very essence of such institutions, that from which they drew their vitality, and upon which their successful working was mainly dependent, was totally wanting here; he meant public spirit, viz., that enlightened idea of self-interest which prompted men under certain political conditions to subordinate individual to public good and to submit cheerfully to self-sacrifice, so that the well-being of the community might be promoted."³¹

As regards the functions of government, Digambar believed in the *laissez-faire* policy of the Manchester School. He opposed the proposal of the Government to abolish the customs of *Antarjali* and *Gangajatra* on the ground that social evils "should be removed by education and enlightenment, and not by the hand of law. He opposed the scheme of the Government to establish primary schools from the proceeds of an education tax, because he believed that the community itself ought to take the responsibility of educating the masses. He said in the Town Hall speech on the 2nd September, 1868 :—"In season and out of season we are accused of always asking Government to do what we should do ourselves. What truth there may be in this charge, is not worth while now to enquire. Certain it is that the best way to cure the evil is not to deprive the people of all power of action but to train them to act for themselves, to induce them to take an active and intelligent in their affairs, to teach them that they should rely upon themselves most, if they wish for the help of others."³²

* Bholanath Chandra observes that Digambar's principle of "selection of the members by certain fixed bodies, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the British Indian Association was not so catholic as that subsequently contended for by the Indian League, who asked for a general right of Municipal election, and which was conferred on the corporation of Calcutta by Sir Richard Temple in 1875. —"Life of Digambar", Vol. I, p. 126.

Digambar may be accused of a good deal of inconsistency in his utterances on the question of mass education. In 1872 he said in the Legislative Council :— "There could be no question that every child had a right to receive an education suited to his condition in life, and if his parents were unable to give it to him, he had an undoubted claim upon the State for the same." But in the same speech he expressed the view that it would be inexpedient to introduce mass education in this country. "Mass education was no doubt desirable alike in the interests of good government and of humanity, but it was equally desirable that a sudden disruption should not take place in the existing social and industrial economy of the country, by its being quickened by a sort of hot-house treatment or pursued under a system of tuition which might inspire a distaste for the specially arduous life to which at least three-fourths of the population of the country were destined."³³

His views on taxation showed the same anxiety for the interests of the Zamindars alone. He condemned the education cess but suggested an additional duty on salt, which he considered to be the least objectionable mode in which an additional revenue could be raised. "No tax could be productive in this country," said he in the Legislative Council in the debate over the Cess Bill in 1871, "which did not reach the poor, because they constitute unfortunately ninety per cent of the population."

Digambar's theory of Patriotism deserves to be quoted, as it shows his insight into this complex psychological feeling. He said in the Fawcett Memorial Meeting on the 26th November, 1872 :—"Patriotism is only developed clanship, and if properly analysed would appear to be another expression of self-love, although more intelligent and enlightened, which leads a man even to face the cannon's mouth for the defence of his own home and hearth and for the glory of his country, with which his own well-being is indissolubly bound up."³⁴

V. Kristodas Pal

(1838-1884)

Kristodas Pal's life between 1861 and 1884 has been called, with some truth, the political history of Bengal for a

quarter of a century. Sir Richard Temple said of him, "I found him next to Sir T. Madhava Rao, the best informed, and most intelligent Indian." But Bholanath Chandra is somewhat severe in his criticism of Kristodas. He says that Kristodas Pal "taught his country-men to run before they could stand alone. He made them forget their begging position, and set them on to extorting by agitation, much of which had the appearance of beggary on horse-back....A man of the people by birth, he disappointed his nation by spending his energies in Zamindari harness."³⁵

Kristodas left college in 1857 at the age of 19, and spent the next four years in reading in the Calcutta Free Library where he stored up a huge mass of information, which became his greatest asset as a public man. In 1861 he became the editor of the 'Hindoo Patriot,' and held that position till his death. In 1861 he became the Assistant Secretary of the British Indian Association, and subsequently in 1879 he became its Secretary. In 1863, he was appointed Commissioner of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation and a Justice of the Peace. In 1872, he was nominated a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council. In 1877 the title of 'Rai Bahadur' was conferred upon him by the Government and in the following year, he was made a C.I.E. In 1883, he was elected by the British Indian Association for a seat in the Imperial Legislative Council, a privilege which was granted to it by Lord Ripon.

Kristodas Pal might be called the father of the policy of 'progressive realisation of self-government.' In a speech in the Bengal Legislative Council in 1875 he said that if the people of India were in any way to be useful to themselves and the nation at large, they could only be so by associating themselves with their European fellow-subjects. "They must learn a good deal, and under the direction and guidance of their rulers might prove themselves equal to the task which they might be called upon to perform."³⁶ He set before himself and the nation the high ideal of colonial type of self-government. He said :—"The British government in this country was a progressive one, and the institutions founded by it were essentially progressive in their nature; and as the people were imbued with western knowledge and ideas, they longed for the western mode of government, and for the introduction

of western institutions, for the protection of their liberties and the advancement of their welfare. It was, therefore, not unnatural that the people of Calcutta, who were admittedly in the van of intelligence and enlightenment should ask for that measure of self-government, which had been accorded to other countries, which owed allegiance to the British Crown—he meant the British Colonies and dependencies.”³⁷ But when he came back to the domain of practical politics, he opposed even the introduction of the elective system in the Calcutta Corporation. Moreover, like the other members of the British Indian Association of this period, he opposed in the columns of the *Hindoo Patriot* the levying of the Education Cess and the Income tax, and suggested in their place the imposition of additional tax on salt.

We have said before that W.C. Bonnerjee delivered a speech at the East India Association in London in 1867 demanding the introduction of representative government in India. Kristodas Pal in a letter to his friend, Shambhoochandra Mookherjee, made the following observations on Mr. Banerjee’s speech :—“Of course the time has not arrived for a representative system, but the importance of the educated natives should be recognised by extending the principles of self-government in the shape of a Delegate Assembly, nominated by Government.”³⁸

He maintains that the origin of the state is to be attributed to the necessity for protection. He shows his acquaintance with the different theories of origin of the state by referring to the patriarchal, contractual and ‘representative theories.’ His own theory may be termed as an admixture of the theories of force and contract. He says :—“In a state of nature, indeed, in every state, man defends himself to the utmost of his powers, from a natural instinct. In the pre-social period, however, these powers are obviously limited. Hence the origin of the state, that is, an organisation, be it represented by a king, hero, prophet or council of elders; strong in the obedience—the necessary obedience it may be, enforced by circumstances and by the anxieties consequent on the insecurity of savage life—of the community able to protect individuals where they fail of themselves. So paramount, so essential is this function of the state, that

individuals consent to put up with the necessary evils of that institution."³⁹

As regards the functions of government, Kristodas thinks that the primary duty of a government is to afford protection to the person and property of subjects.⁴⁰ He is of opinion that the Government is entitled to the loyalty of subjects, mainly because it performs this highly important function. He defines loyalty thus :—"It is allegiance to the ruling power for protection received. That power would have no right to the allegiance of its subjects, if it did not fulfil its duties, if it did not offer protection to their person or property, from external aggression or internal commotion, from the attacks of the unruly and the machinations of the wicked, if it did not give fair play to the springs of industry and allow the people subject to its sway freedom to pursue their callings in peace and security. If it did not make the weal of the community, whose trusted guardian it is, the object of its labours, what right would it have to claim allegiance? So loyalty is, in mercantile parlance, an exchangeable commodity. It is an exchange for value received. It is necessarily calculating, and cannot be otherwise under any form of government. It is because the British Government is a blessing to the country, that the people are attached and loyal to it."⁴¹

He made a bold stand against the repeal of the duties on cotton goods on financial grounds. When he found his efforts to be of no avail, he wrote in the *Hindoo Patriot* :—"The constitution of the Indian Government gives the people no voice in its administration. The will of the autocrat of India is the law for the time. He ordains that the thing shall be done and it is done." Like Raja Rammohun Roy, Kristodas too had a very high regard for the sense of justice of the British people. He wrote in conclusion of the article referred to above :—"But however despotic the visible ruler may be, the invisible genius which protects Britannia, wherever her flag waves, is present in all his beneficence in India, and that genius is never deaf to the *vox populi*."⁴²

CHAPTER VII

POLITICAL THOUGHT OF SISIRKUMAR GHOSH

(1840-1911)

I. Introduction

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, in which all the political ideas of Sisirkumar Ghosh were published, began to appear from Palua Magura, a little village in the Saddar Subdivision of the district of Jessore from the year 1868.¹ The files of the first two years of the *Patrika* seem to have disappeared from the face of the earth; from the third year (1870), however, the old files have been preserved in the office of the *Patrika*. From the perusal of these files it appears that Sisirkumar was the most virulent and uncompromising critic of the British Indian administration in the period between 1870 and 1885, the year of the origin of the Congress. Attacks and criticisms have been levelled against the British Indian administration since the very introduction of English education in a systematic fashion in this country. But what characterises the criticism of Sisirkumar from that of the earlier generations and of his contemporaries is the spirit of intense suspicion towards the Government*. As early as 1872 the *Englishman*, the *Pioneer*

* The following quotation illustrates the new spirit of suspicion which characterised the political views of a certain class of educated people in the seventies of the last century: "The people and Government here are two distinct bodies, their interests clash, their aims and scope differ and the result is a continual struggle between them for prerogatives and privileges. The difference of their position is, indeed, so wide that our Government cannot further the interests of the people without injuring its own interests directly or indirectly."—*A. B. Patrika*, 1st January, 1874.

and the *Observer* accused the *Patrika* of preaching sedition.² Sisirkumar did not belong either to the landed or to the official nobility, nor did he try to acquire self-importance by attaching himself to the Rajas and Zamindars. So in those days of aristocratic domination, he was not recognised publicly as the leader of any school of political thought but hundreds of educated young men came under the spell of Sisirkumar's writings and acknowledged him in their heart of leader of any school of political thought but hundreds of educated young men became extremist leader of the post-Congress era, saluted Sisirkumar as his political Guru.³ Sisirkumar is the first exponent of the Extremist school of Indian politicians not only because of his attitude towards Government but also because of his bold scheme of popular political organisation in this country.

Economic, cultural, political and international causes were at work to give rise to the Extremist school in Bengal in the early seventies of the nineteenth century. Comparatively a large number of Bengali youths had by the that time received English education, which has been the greatest liberalising force in India. They had learnt the history of Greece, Rome, England and France most diligently and the spirit of democratic government which they imbibed from their studies impelled them to agitate for something resembling self-government. In earlier generations those who had received English education were either absorbed in Government service or in lucrative Baniaships or in the learned professions. But from the seventies the supply of educated men for these services and professions began to be greater than the demand and the consequence was that the grim spectre of unemployment began to haunt the minds of the Bengali youths.⁴ The education which they had received enabled them to take an enlightened interest in the government of their country and they saw that all the high posts were reserved for Englishmen. The country had advanced culturally, but economic progress had not kept pace with cultural progress. The Bengali youths had no avenue of employment in trade and industries. So they were extremely discontented with their lot and with the habitual dependence of the Indian people on government began to throw the entire blame on the government for all the evils from which they

suffered. The cost of administration began to mount up rapidly after the transference of political power from the Company to the Crown. To meet the increasing expenditure fresh demands were made on the people in the shape of various new taxes. When the people were thus being taxed, the severe famine of 1865-66 overtook Orissa and a part of Western Bengal. "Food reached eight and ten times and in particular places thirty or thirty-five times the ordinary price, and was not procurable for money in many places."⁵ As the economic condition of the people, and especially of the middle classes, began to grow from bad to worse, political sentiment too began to veer round extremism.

Moreover, the educated middle class grew impatient at the slow rate of political progress of the country. They thought that time had come to entrust them with certain responsibilities of administration; but the Government thought that the condition of the country did not warrant them in making any change in their policy. So a clash of opinions and feelings became inevitable. Sisir Kumar gave voice to the prevailing sentiment of the middle classes in the following words : "The policy adopted by the British nation towards India was something like a semblance of the Roman policy. The principle of government by popular assistance is a part and parcel of the English national mind. They could not get rid of it except by surrendering their own character. This would be committing suicide. Accordingly, the appearance of some of the popular institutions was introduced in India. The Jury system was introduced in a few solitary districts and it was promised to the rest. One-third of the Judgeships of High Courts was declared open to the natives of the country. Municipal self-government was promised unreservedly and semblances of it were introduced generally. Natives of the country were made eligible to the Legislative Councils and solitary native gentlemen have been appointed to the seats therein. Now these acts of British Government pleased the people a great deal. But it pleased them more as holding out hopes rather than as any substantial blessings." Then he points out how the fulfilment of these hopes has been deferred and has consequently given rise to discontent.⁶

Last, though not the least of all, the world movements

were rousing high hopes in the mind of the Bengali youths. The partial unification and the establishment of constitutional government in Italy under the house of Savoy,* the liberation of slaves and the foundation of the Negro state of Liberia as the result of the American Civil War,† the liberal policy of Alexander II in Russia and the triumph of nationalism in Germany and Italy were all watched with deep interest by the educated classes in Bengal and they hoped that they would secure for themselves the benefits which the western world has obtained.

The operation of these new forces made the appearance of extremist political thought almost inevitable. Sisirkumar Ghosh made himself the mouthpiece of this new school of political thought. He was able to captivate the mind of a large section of the educated people of Bengal by making the *Patrika* an organ of the middle classes, by his broad sympathy, brilliant humour, and above all, by his bold attacks on the Government.⁷

Sisirkumar Ghosh was not, however, a mere political agitator. His writings reveal to us some bold political speculations regarding the nature, form and functions of government and especially regarding the theory of punishment. This philosophical basis of his writings is all the more surprising because the whole of his literary output was meant for publication in his *Patrika*, which he served as the editor, composer, printer, despatcher and even as the maker of types and ink with which it was printed. He had no opportunity of receiving high University education. He was

* Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan in an article showing the necessity of sending some representatives to the British Parliament observes that at present public opinion is being consulted in France (Napoleon III gave the right of discussing the budget to the French Legislative Assembly in 1862). Italy has adopted constitutional government and the Czar is contemplating its introduction in Russia. *Shomprakash*, 31st Ashadh, 1269 B.S. (1862).

† Sisirkumar wrote: "That certain races are to be slaves only, is a dogma which has been practically refuted in the case of the Negroes of Liberia and however low and degraded we may be, we are certainly not lower than the Negroes."—*A.B. patrika*, 1st September, 1870.

a self-taught and self-made man. The spirit of philosophical enquiry, with which he was endowed from his very boyhood, later on blossomed forth in his "Amiya Nimai Charit", "Kalachand Gita," "Narottam Charit" and "Lord Gauranga", every one of which is a master-piece in recent Vaishnava Literature.

The inherent Vaishnava sentiment checked his extremist political views from breaking forth into violence. He had an instinctive horror for violent means. He advised the Irish people not to take recourse to violence.⁸ He was a keen student of international politics, and especially of the movements in the British colonies. The constitutional movements in these countries made a strong appeal to his mind and he always urged upon his countrymen the necessity of making constitutional agitation.

II. Sisir Kumar as an Exponent of Middle-Class Democracy

Sisir Kumar Ghosh was one of the earliest and ablest exponents of the democratic form of government in India. We have shown before that Raja Rammohun Roy did not demand any representative legislature, because the necessary condition for the success of such a body was wanting in India in his time. Mr. George Norton, the Advocate-General of Madras, in his lectures in the Madras College Hall in 1833-34 showed indeed the necessity of having some kind of representative legislature, but at the same time expressed the view that time had not yet come for the establishment of such a body in India.* Thoughtful Indians too seem to have realised that the number of men taking an enlightened interest in public affairs was so limited that it would be difficult to find proper constituencies for a representative legislature. The earliest

* "It is only by some means of political representation that the common interests of the people of both these portions of the English Empire can be identified, and their union as fellow subjects be permanently fixed. These means are at present wanting to the people of India; but it is not vain expectation that they will before long be supplied". —Norton's Rudiments (Madras, 1841), p. 266.

demands for "a partially representative legislature" were made by the British Indian Association in 1852 and by Pearychand Mitra in 1853.⁹ Then his opinion was echoed in *The Hindoo Patriot* in February 1857.¹⁰ Then, in 1860, in a public meeting held at the Calcutta Town Hall and attended by "the Europeans and Natives, Hindus and Muhammadans, Jews and Christians," a resolution was passed demanding a Legislative Council, composed of unofficial as well as official members.¹¹ But the Resolution did not specifically mention whether the non-official members were to be elected or nominated. We have shown before that Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan was the first to demand¹² a full-fledged representative legislature. In 1867 Mr. W. C. Bonerjee, while studying in England, delivered a lecture on "Representative and Responsible Government of India." In course of this lecture he said: "My opinion is that there ought to be a representative Assembly, and a Senate sitting in India, with a power of veto to the Governor-General, but under the same restriction as exists in America, with perhaps in absolute power of veto to the Crown".¹³ The next demand came from Dakshinaranjan Mukherjee.¹⁴ Most of these writers simply made the demand without discussing the reasons for which they demanded representative legislature. None of them could point out the means by which the demand might be made an effective one. It was reserved for Sisirkumar Ghosh to adduce philosophical reasons for making a demand for representative legislature and to point out the means by which such a demand could be made irresistible.

The basis of his claim for democracy was the contractual theory of the origin of government. He held that as the number of men increased in a community, there arose the necessity of having an arbitrator who would settle the disputes between different members of the community. So the power of deciding cases was vested in the hands of one, who came to be known as the chief or the Raja.... He was to protect the citizens and to educate them, and in return every member of the society was to make a free gift to him. This gift became the first tax.¹⁵

Sisirkumar believed democracy to be the best of all forms of Government. He argued that democracy gives better security to life and property than despotism, and said that

the Czar of Russia was hated by the people, while the President of U.S.A. is loved by the citizens of America. He further pointed out that had France been a Republic, she would not have suffered defeat at the hands of Germany.¹⁶

From his study of the history of political development of India and Europe, he came to the conclusion that India has become fit for a democratic constitution. He says that there are three stages of political growth in every nation. He designates these stages as rudimentary, centralising and confederating. In the first or rudimentary stage, political life is confined to small areas. The form of government in this stage may be republican or monarchical. "Such were the monarchies of ancient India, Greece, Italy and England. Likewise there were small republics, such as those of the Townships of Hindoostan, Grecian Republics, etc."

The next stage is the growth of national state under despotism. "Then comes the centralising period, when the territorial units of political existence expand in size. Cities become united into provinces and provinces into kingdoms, scattered power concentrates, isolated territories are knit together, tribes are merged into nations, physical prosperity promoted to a high degree, property made more secure, commerce thriving, intellect highly developed, wonderful works of arts constructed and a distinct national pride formed. In this stage, in short, the sinews of the nation are strengthened, and an impulse given to its genius. In England the reign of Elizabeth was the culminating point of this stage; in France, the reign of Louis XIV.

The third stage, designated by Sisirkumar as the confederating stage, is not, as the name would suggest, a period of confederation of nations, but of confederation of political authorities, i.e., in plain words, a democracy. He does not think the early republics of Greece, Rome and India to be the best agencies for the development of a good life, as the sphere of social life in these states was restricted to small areas. He finds fault with the second stage too, because in it unity is realised only in the person of the sovereign. But this stage is the necessary prelude to democracy. "The possession of material and intellectual prosperity in the second stage gives an impetus to the innate dignity of man.

Accordingly, citizens aspire to share the sovereign power in the best way they can. A blow is aimed at monarchical government and a comparatively strong current begins to run counter to its influence".

The transition from despotism to democracy is made, according to him, by serious collision between the monarch and the subjects, as is evidenced from the history of England in the seventeenth and that of France in the eighteenth century.

Having established the general principle of political growth, Sisirkumar applies it to the case of India. He says that India has been under the centralising process of government under the British. This process has been of such great value of Indians that "while independent Asian states such as China and Persia are yet groping in the dark, the Hindoos residing in Asia, enjoy all the advantages of civilised European states and this they owe to their conquerors." But as the logic of history shows, India cannot remain satisfied with it. She must desire the adoption of liberal principles in government. Sisirkumar concludes this essay by observing that "it is not from any feeling of disloyalty that the Native Press loudly cry for redress from English people, it is the immediate sequence of their system of government."¹⁷

We might not agree with his views regarding the ancient Greek and Roman republics; but it must be admitted that this evolutionary study of the development of polity on a comparative basis is a remarkable one. Such a study was not made even in England before 1885-86, when Prof. Sidgwick first began to lecture on this subject to the students of Cambridge.¹⁸ This essay also shows that the Indian students of European history were applying the principles of historical and constitutional development of Europe to the condition of their own country.

Sisirkumar demanded a Parliament for India as early as 1870.¹⁹ He was conscious of the fact that the demand might seem to be a premature one; but he replied that "we have great faith in the destiny of a nation, which has outlived the Moslem oppression and Anglo-Saxon contact." He further added that "Fathers plant trees and children enjoy the fruits;

we may not see a Parliament in India but our children may, and we can die with some consolation, if we can die with this belief."

He based his demand for Parliament, first on the trend of the history of colonies within the British empire. He says that if Canada and Australia were securing autonomy, why should India lag behind? Secondly, he claims self-government as the inherent right of man. 'We as human beings have all the aspirations and privileges of human beings and we do not know how England can reasonably refuse our demand.'²⁰ Thirdly, he shows that India has got all the characteristics of a nation. "As a nation we live, and unlike the Jews, in our own country, with a language, literature, genius, philosophy and a religion of our own." Such an appeal to the cultural basis of political unity and political power has been a potent factor in the establishment of nation-states in modern Greece and Italy. In the seventies of the last century the religious prophets like Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Dayananda did much more than the Orientalists to make the people of India proud of their own culture. Fourthly, Sisirkumar appealed to the basic principle of the English constitution and says, "Nothing short of a representative form of government in some shape ought to be demanded, for those who are taxed should at least be permitted to choose the mode in which the assessment ought to be made."²¹ He was severe in condemnation of the then existing Legislative Councils, as they did not represent the people in any way.

Another reason for demanding a representative Parliament was that the British Parliament was so burdened with other affairs that Indian interest was neglected by it. "If we demand a Parliament of our own from the English people, it is to lighten their trouble."²²

In an article entitled "Legislation by foreigners" he showed still another reason for establishing a representative Legislature in India. He contended in this article that foreigners could never make good laws in an ancient and civilised country like India. By elaborate statistics he proved that the English themselves detected the flaws in laws they had made for India and frequently repealed them. This has happened because the English people could not understand

the spirit of the civilisation of India. "India has a civilisation of its own. It is a distinct country from England and its people have distinctive features, acquired by an exclusive civilisation of thousands of years. It is not for a foreigner to come and at once unravel the Gordian knot. It is not for a foreigner to come and analyse the manners, customs, civilisation and genius of such an intelligent and exclusive race which India is peopled with."²³

Raja Rammohun Roy had shown in 1830-32 that if a large body of cultured Englishmen could be induced to settle in India, the political progress of the country would be accelerated. After the lapse of nearly forty years Sisirkumar too echoes the sentiment. "If we had a large body of European residents here, we might have, perhaps, by this time had a Parliament."²⁴ A large body of Anglo-Indian population had grown up in India since the death of the Raja; a large number of European merchants had been living in India at the time of Sisirkumar. He appealed to these Anglo-Indians and Europeans to make common cause with the Indians on the ground that "constitutionally the Anglo-Indians are as much slaves as we are." "It is a poor satisfaction, no doubt, to the Europeans that they are better off than the natives when they are themselves worse off than the rest of the human race, than their own brothers and relations in England."²⁵

In this connection it is to be noticed that in those early days of Indian nationalist agitation, Sisirkumar's clear vision foresaw the danger to the democratic movement in India from the claim of special privileges for the Mussalmans. He wrote: "Those Mussalmans who are for special privileges must not forget the interests of India. India first and then other considerations. The spectacle of Hindus and Mussalmans quarrelling over the texts of the Puran or the Koran is not at all a serious affair..... But it is altogether a serious affair, when the unthinking Mussalmans cry for special privileges the effect of which can do no good to themselves, but would be very weakening to the country."²⁶

A proposal for the inclusion of several members from India in the British Parliament had been going on since the time of Joseph Hume (1831). The East India Association had been making agitation for it since the sixties of the

last century. Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan also advised the Bengali people to join the Bombayites with a view to making a similar demand.²⁷ But Sisirkumar opposed this scheme on three grounds. First, "We are for Home Rule, and we cannot sympathise with those who are for representatives sent from here."²⁸ Secondly suitable representatives could not be found, and even if found, it would be difficult to get them elected by any English constituency. Thirdly, even if India gets the right of sending her own representatives from India, the Indian members would be in such a hopeless minority that they would not be able to secure any tangible benefit for India. "If India could be adequately represented that would have been a very good thing perhaps, but it is infinite times better to remain unrepresented than to be inadequately represented like Ireland,"²⁹

Sisirkumar knew, what the members of the British Indian Association and the political agitators did not clearly realise, that an isolated opinion expressed in a pamphlet or a newspaper article or even a resolution of the council in favour of India would not make the Government listen to the proposal. Public opinion, not only in the large towns, but also in the district and subdivisional towns must be created by a comprehensive political organisation first of all; and then through persistent agitation by the politically united people the desired goal might be reached.³⁰ "Knock, knock and it shall be opened unto you" was his oft-repeated formula for political agitation.

Sisirkumar was a young man of twenty when the Indigo Disturbance broke out in western Bengal. His nephew Mrinal Babu tells me that Sisirkumar took a leading part along with Babu Vishnucharan Biswas and Digambar Biswas of Chaugacha (Jessore) in organising the Ryots against the Indigo planters.³¹ His name, however, is not mentioned in the Report of the Indigo commission. The tenour of Sisirkumar's writing leads one to believe that he had some part in

* The rulers of the Empire know not the origin of this great combination. It is yet a mystery to them as to how a combination of the apathetic Bengali Ryots, a combination in which about five millions of men took part was brought about so secretly and so suddenly. We shall disclose the secret to-day for the benefit of the

organising the peasants at that time.* Whatever might be his own part in the Indigo Disturbance, he was never tired of talking of it proudly. In his attempt to prove the efficacy of popular organisation he always held up the example of the success attained by the passive resistance of the peasants in 1860. He even went so far as to exhort the Irish people to follow the model of the Bengal peasants. "It is by passive resistance alone, they can bring the landlords to their terms." From this it is not unreasonable to conclude that the idea of organising popular opinion with a view to offering passive resistance to the Government was lurking in his mind.

Sisirkumar wanted to organise public opinion not only in India but also in England and America. His idea of carrying on political propaganda in England was not to appeal to the governing classes there, but to the middle classes who "are of opinion that India should be justly governed for the benefit of Indians, if it is to be retained at all."³²

His idea regarding the enlistment of sympathy for the Indian cause from America is remarkable. Such an idea, probably, did not come to the mind of any other man in Bengal in those early days of Indian national movement. In 1871 an American politician, named Mr. Seward, visited the Punjab and left the country with an impression, based on a District Magistrate's statement, that India was very lightly taxed. On that occasion Sisirkumar wrote: "We have thus lost a great chance of provoking adverse criticism regarding the Government of our country in America.....What we say is lost in the winds, we simply cry in the wilderness, but the remarks of a rival nation cannot be trifled with.....If there is a rivalry between nations regarding their wealth, power and intelligence, there is also a rivalry regarding their goodness, generosity and justice. Would England like to be taunted with oppression and injustice? Proud and haughty as the English people are, they would feel it most deeply. Would England like to be charged before the whole world that she is not as good to India as she should be?"³³

rulers of the land who are quite satisfied with themselves, when 'the public feeling is in a quiescent state'. We feel now no hesitation in disclosing the secret, because the noble heroes of our story are both dead."— *A.B. Patrika*, September 3, 1880.

We have tried to show so far that Sisirkumar was in favour of organising the politically-minded people of Bengal into a compact and representative political association, and thereby compelling the Government to defer to the wishes of the middle classes. He was the first man in Bengal to protest against the exclusive privilege of the landed aristocracy of representing the people. He was equally against the method of entrusting a voice in public affairs to the Ryots. He was a staunch advocate of the middle-class democracy. The following quotation explains his reason for entrusting the middle class alone with political power: "They (the Zamindars) cannot properly represent the myriads of the people of Bengal.....The opinion prevails and we cannot gainsay it, that, as a rule, while eagerly grasping the power of rank and wealth, they (the Zamindars) are culpably neglectful of the duties and obligations which the possession of property imposes. With many bright exceptions, the majority are sunk in sensuality and sloth, mindful of their ease and comfort, and indifferent to the interests of these dependent on them. The masses compose the Ryotary class, but plunged in deep ignorance, unconscious of their own powers and unable to exercise them, wanting in the means whereby they can make themselves heard by Government, it is next to impossible that a representative man can be found amongst them. The gentry class is the most important of all, but unfortunately the existence of such a class is not even so much as acknowledged by Government. They have, in fact, no legal existence in Bengal. Amongst all civilised countries the gentry or middle class carries the greatest influence in all matters, and so it is in Bengal. But Government purposely ignores the existence of this class."³⁴

He maintained that there was such an antagonism of economic interests between the Zamindars and the Ryots that it was impossible for the former to represent the latter. The middle class alone, according to him, was capable of protecting and representing the interests of the Ryots. He would like to vest political power in the middle classes (meaning thereby the members of the professions such as doctors, pleaders, teachers, traders, etc., and probably the small estate-holders), but would urge them to promote the interests of the masses. "No association can ever secure

lasting importance, or become truly national, which does not take up the interest of the masses against those of the few who oppress them."³⁵ In the first stage of democracy the bourgeoisie made claims to represent the peasants and artisans everywhere in the world, just as in the earlier days the enlightened despots claimed to represent the nation as a whole. But the economic struggles between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has shown that the former cannot truly represent the interests of the latter. In India, too, we find numerous instances illustrating the truth of this general principle. Among others we may take the instance of Sisirkumar himself. He was generous and philanthropic, no doubt, but when any serious clash of interests arose between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, he invariably advocated the cause of the former. He did not like to give any portion of the money, so long utilised for promoting higher education of the classes, for promoting primary education of the masses.* He protested against the Factory Act of 1877, because it did not allow the capitalist employers to exact work for 16 hours a day from an operative.†

III. His Views on Local Self-government

As Sisirkumar was a staunch advocate of the democratic form of government, it is naturally to be expected that he

* *Ibid*, 'National Education', Feb. 21, 1878. "The best safety of government against insurrections now is that the masses are unable to look into the doings of the Government and educated natives intervene between the Government and them. But give the common people a little knowledge, however small, and reduce the middle classes to their level by doing away with high education, then the common people will learn to chafe at the measures of taxation and turn the discontent against the Government which they now manifest against Mahajans and landlord's. Certainly this consideration should not persuade the Government to withhold mass education. All we say is that the Government should at the same time go on advancing high education to interest the middle classes to its cause."

† 'Factory Act in India,' "A large death rate amongst our operatives is far more preferable to the collapse of this industry", "We can, after the manufactures are fully established, seek to protect the operatives." (*A. B. Patrika*, Sept. 2, 1875).

would make a strong plea for the introduction of local self-government in Bengal. But it is curious to note that he opposed Sir George Campbell's idea of establishing rural municipalities in 1871.³⁶ The real reason for such an opposition was not that he was against the idea of self-government in the sphere of local administration but that he was highly suspicious of any scheme originating from the brain of Sir George Campbell. He thought that Sir George was trying to impose only new taxes without giving to the people the reality of self-government. "The more the municipalities multiply the more and more the Government will shift its own legitimate burden upon the shoulders of the people."³⁷ That he was not against the very idea of local self-government in 1871-72 is proved by the following quotation from his writings: "Make these councils elective, let even the Chairman be elected by the rate-payers and we believe people will not grudge the imposition of fresh taxation. If Mr. Campbell is sincerely desirous of granting a great boon to the people of Bengal, he can have no objection to make such changes in the body of the bill as would meet the requirements of the people. There can be no political danger in giving power over such minor matters as education, sanitation, etc., to the people, and we hope Mr. Campbell will thus secure the blessing of the forty millions entrusted to his care."³⁸

He advocated the immediate introduction of local self-government for three reasons. First, that the management of local administration will give experience to the people in managing their own affairs. "Let the people have their own commissioners, let the people spend their own money, squander away if they choose, and nobody except themselves will be losers by their folly. Experience will at last teach them how to husband their resources, and experience is the best of teachers."³⁹ There is a general impression amongst students of history that Lord Ripon was the first man to introduce local self-government "as a measure of political and popular education." But as a matter of fact, Sisirkumar used this very argument for the introduction of local self-government eight years before Lord Ripon did. Sisirkumar wrote in 1875: "It may form the nucleus of political freedom of the nation. We have hitherto depended too much upon Government. Even a social reform we have not dared to undertake without loudly

calling for the aid of the Government; widow marriage is to be legalised, polygamy to be abolished, obscene literature to be suppressed and for all these we have poured out deep bewailings into the ears of the ruling race. We have thus rendered ourselves quite helpless and placed our destinies at the tender mercies of our Governors. We have forgotten the art of taking care of ourselves, and if we continue in this state a century more, we shall be under the necessity of seeking the aid of our ruler even in managing our own household affairs. It behoves our countrymen, therefore, to bestir themselves and urge upon the Government with all their might to teach them to govern themselves.⁴⁰ The third reason adduced by Sisirkumar in favour of the introduction of local self-government was that it would teach the Ryots that they have got certain rights and that this consciousness would encourage them to resist the oppressions of the Zamindars and the petty government servants. "The Government has done much to conciliate the higher classes of Indians, but it has done nothing to conciliate the masses. The masses pay all the taxes, and what do they get in return? Education they have not got. Protection? Protection from whom? They get no protection from the oppression of the Government servants. They are much more oppressed by the police and tax-gatherers than the better classes. As for protection from the strong, it is true that the stronger now cannot beat the weak at his pleasure, but he can do worse. He can harass the Ryots, ruin them in law courts, and that is worse than beating. The self-government measure will, however, be a real boon to them. It will teach them that they have political rights, which they can exercise to their advantage, and thus they will be naturally more loyal to the constituted authorities than they are at present."⁴¹

His idea about local self-government, however, was far more comprehensive than what Lord Ripon conceived it to be, or what has been conceded even now. He wanted the introduction of a purely elective system in the Mufassil municipalities.⁴² He strongly objected to the appointment of magistrates as chairmen of District Boards.⁴³

He would like to transfer the control of the police to the District Boards, just as in England the Country Councils,

control the local police force. "If the police are placed under the management of the Boards, there will be less oppression; the innocent will have less chance of being hauled up and the guilty of escaping. We can also venture to add that if the Police Department is made over to the Boards, the feeling that the Government is alien, will disappear from the country."⁴⁴ Moreover, he wanted that the old Panchayats should be revived in the villages. The headman should be elected by the villagers and he should be empowered by the Government to receive all complaints regarding petty offences. The suitors themselves should nominate the Panchayat to decide their case. Thus according to Sisirkumar, there should be no permanent Panchayat. "The cases to be tried by these village Panchayats may be limited to simple hurt, assault, abuse, trespass, and debts not exceeding a small sum. In the cases of hurt, assault, abuse and cattle trespass, the power of the Panchayat may be limited to awarding damage not exceeding Rupees five."⁴⁵

When Sir Richard Temple wanted to introduce an elective system in the Calcutta Municipality, the Powerful justices (municipal commissioners were called Justices in imitation of the English Justices of Peace) strongly opposed the measure. Sir Richard desired that the people should express their opinion in favour of election. Sisirkumar, who enjoyed the confidence of Sir Richard Temple, galvanised public opinion in support of the elective system.⁴⁶ In 1882 he recounted with great self-satisfaction the part he had played in introducing the elective system in the Calcutta Corporation.* On the eve

* *Ibid.*, July 13, 1882. 'It is not known how this great privilege came to be granted to the citizens of Calcutta; but this important matter was settled between two individuals, one a ruler and the other one of the subject race, viz., Sir Richard Temple and a Hindu. Said Sir Richard: "Do you really think that the scheme will succeed?" "Yes, if you sincerely wish it," replied the Hindu. "But I do sincerely wish it", replied Sir Richard Temple. The Hindu said: "But the European residents in the town will make such a row that it would be a very disagreeable, perhaps a difficult task for your Honour to go through that opposition." "You mean the shopkeepers, well, if the scheme fails it will not be for want of active interest on my part." He kept this word, and the scheme succeeded.'

of the first election to the Calcutta Corporation he wrote an article entitled "Calcutta under Trial" explaining clearly the principles which should guide the voters in exercising their franchise. If the advice which he tendered in that article be followed by the electors in India to-day, much of the corruption in political life would vanish away. To him the exercise of franchise was 'the discharge of a sacred commission' and he demanded of the elector the exertion of all his intellectual and moral powers in voting for a particular candidate.⁴⁷

IV. His Views on Civil Liberty

Like Raja Rammohun Roy, Sisirkumar was a strong advocate of civil liberty. The Raja's opinion was that Indians have been compensated for the loss of political liberty by the recognition of civil liberty under the British Government. He had warned the Government that if the civil liberty which the Indian people had fondly expected to enjoy under the British Government be curtailed, there would arise grave discontent amongst them. In the sixties and seventies of the last century serious restrictions were placed on the civil liberty of the people. Sisirkumar pointed out forcibly how the ordinary rights of citizenship had been curtailed one after another, how the Criminal Procedure Code was followed by the Dramatic Performances Act, the Press Act and the Arms Act, and how these measures gave the magistrate "absolute control over the rights, human and divine, of the people of India."⁴⁸ The Raja had admitted that under the Muhammadan Government the very existence of civil liberty was unknown. But Sisirkumar now pointed out that even the despotic Mughal Government did not take away from the subjects the right of bearing arms or of holding a religious controversy with a Mullah.

The Raja had thought that codification of law would guarantee civil liberty to the people, inasmuch as they would be able to know their rights and would be saved from the arbitrary decision of the judges. But Sisirkumar maintained that the Civil Procedure Act of 1859, the Criminal Law (Act XLY of 1860), the Evidence Act I of 1872 and the Criminal Procedure Act (Act X of 1872) have failed to give any satisfaction to the people; "and some of them are regarded as

a standing menace to the liberty of the subject." When Mr. Whitley Stokes made further attempts to codify the existing laws in 1877, Sisirkumar protested against the proposed codification. He admitted, indeed, that the civil laws of the Hindus are susceptible of much improvement, "but the task of reformation in this respect cannot be safely entrusted to the hands of foreigners. So far it is quite certain that certain branches of judiciary laws can be codified with advantage, but any wholesale codification might prove extremely dangerous so long as the task of framing codes is not made over to the people for whose benefit they are to be framed."⁴⁹

The chief guarantee of civil liberty lies in the fair and impartial administration of justice. It is for this reason that Raja Rammohun made such heroic efforts to reform the judiciary in India. But most of the charges which he brought against the judicial system in India, were repeated more than forty years after his death by Bankimchandra and Sisirkumar. Sisirkumar might have been influenced by Bankimchandra in his views about the costliness of law-courts and the utter helplessness of the peasants. The courts, in the opinion of both Bankimchandra and Sisirkumar, are a powerful machinery for the Zamindar and Mahajan to crush the Ryots. But neither Rammohun nor Bankimchandra did suggest that the revival of the old Panchayat courts would remedy the multifarious evils from which the people had been suffering in the law courts. Sisirkumar, however, evinced a strong faith in the village Panchayat as a powerful agent for protecting the life and liberty of the subjects. He maintained that the elaborate technicalities of the Roman Jurisprudence and the English Common Law were not suited to India; so means must be found out to give justice to the poor and ignorant villagers in the cheapest and speediest way possible. The Panchayat alone can administer justice in this way.⁵⁰

Like Rammohun, Sisirkumar too held the jury system to be a guarantee of civil liberty of the people. But some of his contemporaries held the jury system to be an antiquated anomaly in the modern age. Sisirkumar adduced an original reason for the employment of trial by jury in India. He held that the Civilian judges lose their faith in the goodness of man. They constantly deal with criminals and think every

person brought before them to be a criminal. Moreover, they contract a habit of punishing men. To counteract these propensities in their minds jurors should be employed.⁵¹

Like all other political writers of this period Sisirkumar too advocated absolute equality of law between the Indians and Europeans.⁵²

V. Theory of Punishment

Sisirkumar's theory of punishment marks him as one of the original thinkers in the domain of political philosophy. The basic problem of politics is human nature itself. It is the difference of opinions regarding human nature and its capacities for improvement which has given birth to different political theories. A believer in the democratic form of government must be an optimist regarding the potential powers of human mind. Sisirkumar as a democrat believed progress to be the essential characteristic of human nature. From his studies of Vaishnavism he came to hold that even the vilest of sinners could be reclaimed from the evil course of life. If this be true of sinners, he could find no reason why criminals could not be reformed by good education. His contention is that the dealings of the Government with the criminal must be characterised by pity, sympathy and brotherly love for the unfortunate creature. He made a strong appeal for giving up that spirit of revenge towards the criminal which characterised the barbarous people.⁵³

The particular and immediate fact which evoked the sentiment of pity and sympathy in his mind was the excessive severity of prison-life under the British Indian administration. He proved from Government reports that one-tenth of the convicts died in the prison. He also proved that the health of all the prisoners was undermined owing to the bad diet and worse sanitary arrangements provided for in Bengal jails.* Sisirkumar attacked the Government in season and out of

* "When the tenth part of the entire jail population are obliged to die, we think it would not be unfair to calculate that more than one-fourth are all but sacrificed, and that all of them are hurt, some grievously and some slightly.....Mr. O'Donnell called the attention

season like a Philistine, as he himself admits, though at heart he was not at all a Philistine but a follower of the Religion of Love. This inner religion of Sisirkumar led him to write on the woes and miseries of prison-life again and again.

He maintains that the criminal propensities are a mental disease.⁵⁴ Ignorance is the chief cause of this disease. He quotes Locke to show that "of all men we meet, nine out of ten are what they are, good or bad, useful or not, according to their education." It is the duty of society to "bring out and train those divine principles of justice, right, truth, goodness and love, that exist germinally in every soul." If society fails in its duty to educate the citizens, it should not assume the power of punishing those who might go astray from the path of rectitude. He was quite conscious of the fact that society was not organised and developed enough to assume such responsibility. If, then, the ignorant people are to be sent to prison, let efforts be made to reclaim them from bad life. "They should be in reform schools and moral hospitals, under the gentle discipline and tender care of those whose great souls are tuned to the keynotes of love and wisdom."*

He finds another cause of crime in poverty. He holds that the majority of the people who are sent to jail are not criminals by nature, but being severely pressed by poverty take to evil course. So he warmly supported Miss Carpenter's efforts to establish a Reformatory School. He advised that in such a school the convicts should be trained to a profession

(in the House of Commons) to the 'flogging of 11,000 prisoners in the gaols of Bengal during the period of excessive mortality between the 1st day of January, 1879 and the 31st March, 1880, almost exclusively on charge of short work.'—*A. B. Patrika*, September 14, 1882.

* 'Educate our Criminals', August 8, 1870. This essay reveals the kind and loving heart of a true Vaishnava. "Our heart aches for the unfortunate children of the earth, made so by organisation, ignorance, base surroundings, stern necessity and society, blind to its highest interest. We cannot find it in our soul to condemn any one, to blame any one, but sympathising with all, even the most hardened criminal, we feel it our duty to press their claims for education and kindness upon reformers and philanthropists everywhere."

which they may practise to earn their livelihood after their release from jails.⁵⁵

He suggests that steps should be taken gradually to eradicate punishment from the system of government. He asks whether it is not possible to banish crime altogether from society by devoting that labour and money which are spent for arresting, convicting and punishing the criminals to the imparting of education to the people. Sisirkumar, here, showed himself to be too sanguine about human nature. In spite of the prevalence of universal compulsory education, the crime record in the United States of America is highest today. It might be said of course that the masses in America are not receiving education of the right sort, but it is difficult to devise any educational system which would do away with the necessity of maintaining police and prison.

Sisirkumar was not unaware of this difficulty. He did not demand immediate abolition of punishment. He threw in a suggestion which might be taken up in future, when the social instinct of man would be highly developed.⁵⁶ In another article he admitted that under the present circumstances punishment cannot be eliminated altogether.⁵⁷

But he advocated the immediate abolition of death sentence. According to him there are three objects of punishment—to reform the criminal, to show a deterrent example to society with the object of checking crimes in future, and to make compensation for the damages done by the criminal. He does not admit that the satisfaction of a base passion like revenge should be an object of punishment. He tries to show that none of these three objects can be fulfilled by awarding death sentence. If a criminal is hanged, his reform is out of the question. As regards deterring others from committing crimes, he says that those who commit the most heinous crimes, suffer from a temporary insanity at the time of committing the crime. Fear of death cannot find any place in their mind at that time. Moreover, these persons commit the heinous crime at a time when life becomes unbearable to them. At that time death sentence does not rouse any fear in their mind. As regards the third object of punishment, there would be no compensation for the death of the murdered by taking away the life of the murderer. Then he shows that crimes

have not increased in those countries where death sentence has been abolished. Lastly, he takes recourse to the political philosophy of Locke to show that death sentence cannot be legally awarded by Government, because Government was originally instituted for the protection of life and property of the people. Moreover, nobody can claim any right even over one's own life. That which does not belong to one cannot be given to another. So government is not justified in awarding death sentence.⁵⁸

Co-operation of the subjects and a close identity of interests between the rulers and the ruled are essential for the success of any form of government. From the seventies of the last century the spirit of co-operation and sympathy between the government and the governed in India began to decline. The frequent comment of the administrators of this country to the effect that the people do not cooperate with the police in apprehending criminals and show active sympathy for the latter, evoked from Sisirkumar the following observations : "A man charged with crime is sympathised with, because, firstly, in India people are indiscriminately apprehended, and no thought is given to the subject whether a man is sent to the lock-up upon sufficient or insufficient evidence. The second reason is that, a man so charged, is treated like a beast of prey in a cage, and incessantly persecuted sometimes to death and is never allowed a fair chance of proving his innocence."⁵⁹

VI. His Views on Education

Sisirkumar was a champion of higher education in Bengal. He was not actually opposed to the education of the masses, but he directed his energy to the advocacy of higher education of the middle class. He believed that education of the middle class alone can bring about an improvement in the political status of the country.

He thought it a duty of the state to provide education for its citizens. He took grave exception to Lord Lawrence's pronouncement to the effect that Government was not bound to give education to the people.⁶⁰ During the administration of Lord Mayo the Krishnagar and Bernhampton Colleges were

abolished and the Sanskrit and Patna Colleges were threatened with extinction. Sisirkumar vehemently protested against these steps and his writings were partially responsible for the organisation of as many as sixty protest meetings all over Bengal.⁶¹ He wrote : "The Government openly declared that to give education to the people was to sow seeds of sedition, and seriously contemplated the throwing of all possible obstacles in the way of their attaining to high education. In fact, the attitude of Government towards the education of the people appeared to be anything but favourable, and the general belief is that our rulers would no longer help the cause of education."⁶² When, however, Sir Richard Temple took steps to revive the Berhampore and Krishnagar Colleges and to establish a new College at Rajshahi and several high schools at Rungpore, Ranchi and Chittagong, Sisirkumar gave up his attitude of suspicion towards the Government. "All that the rulers can do," wrote he in appreciation of Sir Richard's efforts, "is to merit dominion by promoting the happiness of those under them. If the English perform their duty in this respect, the gratitude of India and the admiration of the world will accompany their name through all ages, whatever may be the revolutions of futurity."

Raja Rammohun made heroic efforts to make the English language the medium of high education in India. The purpose for which he strove to bring in the current of the "English education" in India seems to have been fulfilled within forty years of his death. In the seventies of the last century the cry was raised for imparting high education through the medium of vernaculars. Sisirkumar wrote in 1873 that high education should be imparted through the medium of vernaculars without impairing the standard.⁶³ He further developed this idea in an article published in 1884. He argued that the education imparted through the medium of a foreign language cannot be a healthy and sound one. In the majority of cases the mind of the learner hardly reaches the subject-matter with any degree of relish or vigour and in some cases it is utterly wrecked in the way. Secondly, he held that the English medium has made learning a monopoly of the few. "Those alone who are rich in money may go through the forms of it. Those who are rich in money and also rich in intellect

may benefit by it to some extent." But the general mass of the people cannot derive any benefit from it. Such an education creates a new caste, cut off from the people and with little sympathy for them. "That caste is full of pedantry and superficial ideas." Thirdly, such an education is utterly ruinous to the nation. Knowledge cannot take root in the national mind if it is imparted through the medium of a foreign tongue. Sisirkumar was certainly not against the cultivation of the English language itself, but he wanted that it should be studied "as a subject in itself, as people of other countries study languages foreign to those countries."⁶⁴

Sisirkumar was one of the earliest advocates of technical and industrial education in this country. In 1875 he pleaded for the establishment of a college of technology in Bengal. He was painfully conscious of the backwardness of industries in this country, and to remove this he wanted that the middle class people who have had already some general education should take admission in the proposed college. He drew up and published a curriculum for such a college. Besides theoretical training for a period of five years, the students should have practical training in the workshop for two hours every day. They should be trained in the following manufacturing process :—Cloth manufacture, weaving, bleaching, furnishing, dyeing and printing; jute manufacture; silk manufacture; sugar; oil, paper manufacture etc. He calculated the annual expenditure for the maintenance of such a college to be Rs.16,000.⁶⁵

We have already mentioned that Sisirkumar did not devote much thought to the education of the masses. He thought that the education of the peasants should be eminently practical in character, teaching them how to improve the soil and the method of cultivation. They must first of all be supplied with the means of sustaining their life and then they might be given literary education. He suggested that the money which the Government had been spending on their education would be better utilised if a Peoples' Bank were established to free them from the clutches of the Mahajans.⁶⁶

It would be wrong, however, to think that he was altogether against literary education of the masses. "The real point at issue is not whether the education of the lower classes is

desirable or not, there is but one opinion on this point, but whether it is desirable to extend lower education at the expense of the higher. The Bengalees contend that it is not."⁶⁷

VII. His Views on the Freedom of the Press

Sisirkumar wrote much on the freedom of the Press, but he could not improve upon the masterly arguments given by Raja Rammohun Roy in his famous appeal for the liberty of the Press. Almost from the beginning of the publication of the *Patrika* from Calcutta, the Government looked upon it with grave suspicion. This attitude of the Government reacted upon him and he frankly stated that it was the object of the Indian Press to oppose the Government. "The chief function of the native Press, like that of the opposition member, is to oppose the Government measures or in other words, to seek the interest of the people." He admitted that the inevitable consequence of such criticism would be to create a distrust towards the Government.⁶⁸ In another article he said that the only instrument with which the people can fight with the Government is a newspaper.⁶⁹

He contended that the freedom of the Press is necessary for good government. It diverts the discontent of the people "from the internal system where it may prove dangerous, to the surface."⁷⁰ When the Vernacular Press Act was passed at one sitting, he suddenly changed his paper by Herculean efforts from a bilingual one to a purely English newspaper. Having thus evaded the rigorous restrictions of the Vernacular Press Act he wrote a series of articles condemning the Act and proving the utility of a Free Press.⁷¹ The repeal of the Act in 1882 removed much of the suspicion against the Government from his mind. "Hitherto the custom with newspapers generally was to view all Government measures, even when they were palpably meant for the good of the people with suspicion; but now that the Press has been taken into confidence by the Government, its criticisms are likely to be free from that hostile attitude, which the Press had hitherto assumed in discussing the measures of Government."⁷²

* A. B. *Patrika*, March 21, 1878. It is to be noted here that the Vernacular Press Act was supported even by some vernacular

VIII. Government in relation to Economic Activities

Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Sisirkumar believed that India can attain prosperity and greatness only by the industrialisation of the country. He held that in commerce the relation between England and India is like that of the labourer and capitalist. As the labourers produce the wealth but the capitalists enjoy it, so does India produce raw materials and England derive profit from it by turning them into finished products.⁷² So long as India would continue to produce raw materials only she would remain poor, as America remained comparatively a poor country till she turned to manufacture. "To induce the people to take to agriculture is to reduce a country to poverty. The art of agriculture even carried to high perfection has not been able as yet to make a nation rich."⁷³ He wrote a series of articles suggesting the introduction of new industries in India. For some of these suggestions he was indebted to the rising school of economists of Bombay. Sisirkumar made an independent study also of the industrial possibilities of India. He suggested that labour and raw materials being found in plenty and the process of manufacture being comparatively an easy one the following industries should be introduced and developed in India :—cloth, woollen glass, pottery, bricks, cement, tanning, paper, candles, marble works, manure and soap.⁷⁴ We have already shown how he appealed to the Government for the establishment of a college of technology in Bengal.

papers. The monthly magazine "Bandhab," edited by Kaliprasanna Ghosh supported it on the ground that it aimed at punishing those, who were the enemies of mankind. First, it would punish those who attack the English as oppressors. But as a matter of fact the English government is bringing about the national unification of India; it is trying to ameliorate social and political condition of the people; and it has conferred greater amount of individual liberty than what the people had enjoyed under the Hindu and Mussalman governments. The journalists who would ignore these benefits of the British rule and only incite the people to discontent really deserve punishment. Secondly, those who by their writings would rouse religious passions or would intimidate others, would be brought within the ambit of law. Persons who inflict so much injury on society should really be punished. "Bandhab," Vol. IV, No. 2, 1285 B.S.

For the development of these industries he wanted that the Government should adopt the policy of Protection as against Free trade. He held that Free trade policy was adopted in India on the pressure of the Manchester manufacturers and not on purely economic grounds. He showed that even a staunch advocate of Free trade like Mill favoured a policy of Protection for a country like India. He wrote: "What does he (Mill) say about this protection to native industry? 'The only case in which on mere principles of political economy, protecting duties can be defensible is when they are imposed (especially in a young and rising nation) in hopes of naturalising a foreign industry, in itself, perfectly suitable to the circumstances of the country.' Is not the cotton manufacture in India, for example, a rising industry, requiring encouragement in its infancy?" He was a keen student of the contemporary colonial development and he showed how the British colonies were adopting the policy of Protection.⁷⁵ He saw that Victoria and South Australia began to impose tariffs from 1879 and their example was followed by Western Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Queensland, Canada and the Cape Colony. "Among England's own colonies, heavy import duties are levied. Those that had not imposed them in 1879 are now imposing them at a high rate, and everywhere they have been increased within the last two or three years to an enormous extent.....But in India Free trade is enforced with a vengeance."⁷⁶

Free trade was the main plank of the politico-economic doctrine of *Laissez-faire*. In England the Government refused to intervene on behalf of the poor artisans out of respect for the *Laissez-faire* doctrine in the early days of the Industrial Revolution. The introduction of the Free trade policy during the ministry of Sir Robert Peel completed the movement begun by Adam Smith.

In India, on the other hand, public opinion sought the abandonment of the *Laissez-faire* policy in trade, but adhered to that policy in regulating the relation between labour and capital. Sisirkumar advocated the intervention of the Government in matters of trade, but would not tolerate any interference from Government in regulating the hours of labour in factories. In his attempt to show the needlessness

of the of the Factory Act, Sisirkumar wrote: "The operatives in our mills are not slaves; or in other words, they are at perfect liberty to serve in the mills or give up their employment and seek a livelihood elsewhere."⁷⁷ This contradictory attitude of Sisirkumar towards the *Laissez-faire* policy lends support to the theory that political circumstances give rise to political and economic doctrines.

In pleading for a policy of Protection, Sisirkumar knew from the very beginning that he was crying in the wilderness. Yet at first he could not think of any other means of developing the Indian industries. But the people of Dacca, on seeing the determined attempt of the Manchester manufacturers to hamper the growing cotton industry of Bombay, resolved to boycott Manchester cloth in the middle of 1875. At that time Sisirkumar thought that the attempt of the Dacca people was premature. "Before we form such a combination it is necessary to establish mills to supply our own requirements."⁷⁸ But in less than a month he was converted to the creed of economic boycott. He thought that India would gain great political advantages by buying less goods from England. "The lesser India pays to England, the more she will be generously treated.....If India paid less the English people would not much care to give the people some power; and if India paid nothing at all, they would not object to leave the country in our hands."⁷⁹

We have shown before that most of the leaders of thought in Bengal in the pre-Mutiny era had advocated increment of pay in lower grade of public officials, probably with the hope that all such posts would come to Indians. But during the two decades following the Mutiny the cost of administration rose so high that not only the public but also the Government became anxious to curtail expenditure. In this period Sisirkumar pointed out several means for curtailing public expenditure and for increasing public revenue. The first and foremost of his suggestions regarding economy was the Indianisation of the services. He pointed out that 130 officers performing the duties of Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Judicial Commissioners, etc., draw the sum of Rs. 2,537,800 annually from the State. "Need we mention here, that 130 Natives of equal, if not of better merit, would

perform the same duties for the tenth part of the above sum? How is it possible for a very poor country to keep its finances healthy, if she is made to import richly paid officers from a foreign country to perform the commonest duties of the state?"* The second means suggested by Sisirkumar was the reduction of military expenditure. He held that India did not require a huge army to protect herself against foreign invasion, as the neighbouring Asiatic countries were weak.⁸⁰ He said that if drastic steps be not taken to reduce expenditure, an inevitable crush would make the Indian Government bankrupt.†

Sisirkumar strongly advocated Indianisation of the services, but at the same time he suspected that those Indians who receive high appointments sell themselves to the Government. "The Deputy Magistrates have been purchased by Government and we have sold the best specimens of our nation; if they altogether forget their old ties and turn pliant tools and slaves in the hands of their new master, the loss to the country becomes not only immense, but we set our own countrymen against us. That there is a danger of these Magistrates turning as great a foe to their country as some civilian magistrates are, will be clear to those who have given the subject any thought. The reason is obvious. The Government appeals to their interest and selfishness, and the people to their patriotism and other higher feelings; but interest generally gains the day."—*A. B. Patrika*, June 25, 1874. This is exactly the reason why the extremist party in the Congress gave up the old cry of Indianisation of the services and began to demand absolute control of the administrative machinery.

Sisirkumar condemned the imposition of the road cess

* *Ibid.*, April, 21 1870. Also 1871, p.43. "Fifty thousand deserving Natives are pining away under discouragement, disappointment and poverty, while Government servants are indentured from England at heavy costs."

† *Ibid.*, September 15, 1878. "The country cannot bear the strain any longer. The frequent famines are indications which are unmistakable, and if statesmen satisfy their conscience by the exclusive thought that retrenchment is not possible, the insolvency of the nation will follow inevitably."

most severely, but he was not altogether hostile to other forms of taxation, if the urgency of imposing one could be proved. The only safeguard he demanded was that the taxes should be levied according to sound principles of taxation. What he understood to be fair principles of taxation will be seen from the following:—"The cardinal principle of a sound system of taxation is that the greatest amount of money might be brought into public treasury with the least degree of oppression to the subject. Oppression may proceed from two causes, first if the incidence of the tax is disproportionate to the means of the parties; secondly, if the machinery for collection is such as to leave it open to them to commit acts of oppression intentionally or unwillingly."⁸¹ He judged the case of income tax by these two canons and came to the conclusion that it was a fair tax. It must be remembered that the Anglo-Indian Press and the newspapers controlled by the Zamindars were condemning the imposition of the income tax in one voice at that time. When in 1872 proposals were being made to abolish the income tax, he pleaded for its retention on three grounds. First, that as the tax is levied on annual incomes above Rs. 750, one man only in eight hundred is to pay this tax; and secondly that as the English merchants, planters and officers would also pay it, they would join the Indians in securing economy in administration.⁸² Thirdly, "the abolition of the income tax will result in the transfer of a burden which is now borne by the rich, who can most easily bear it, to the shoulders of an overburdened and starving population."⁸³ It is difficult to find any exception to these arguments in the light of modern theories of public finance. When a proposal was made to tax tobacco in 1870, he opposed it on the ground that it would impose great hardship on the peasants; he suggested instead a moderate tax on marriage. He held that the Muhammadan rulers had levied such a tax and the Zamindars of Bengal levied it at his time, so the tax was an indigenous one.⁸⁴

It is curious to note that he suggested an increase in salt tax in place of road cess. He wrote that salt was being sold at two annas per seer; if the salt tax be increased by six annas per maund, it would raise the price of salt by a little more than half-a-pice per seer and the people would readily consent to pay that, provided the road cess was abolished.⁸⁵

He criticised severely the guaranteed system of railways.⁸⁶ He thought that canals are far more important than railways, because canals not only establish communication between different parts of the country but also supply the fields with water.⁸⁷

VIII. *His Views on Imperialism*

The Crystal Palace speech of Disraeli in 1872 marks the beginning of the New Imperialism of Great Britain. The *Laissez-faire* policy which had been followed by Great Britain in her relation with the colonies since the American War of Independence now gave way to the policy of closer relation between the colonies and the mother country. This change of policy had its repercussion on the policy of British Indian Government towards the Indian States. Dodwell is of opinion that the fiction of sovereignty of Indian states disappeared in 1858; and thenceforward the Princes of India became subjects, high in rank, indeed, but still the subjects of the Queen; and their international position disappeared. But in 1877 Sisirkumar pointed out that in 1858 it was settled that the Indian Princes should be maintained in their sovereignty in consideration of the facts that they had remained friendly to the British during the Mutiny and that the territories annexed by Dalhousie had proved to be hotbeds of sedition. In 1862 Lord Canning made a beginning of the policy of asserting suzerainty over the princes by granting Sanads of succession to them and then by conferring Knighthood of the star of India Order on them. These were but indirect steps; the claim of suzerainty was boldly proclaimed during the premiership of Disraeli (1874-1880).^{*} It reflects great credit

^{*} *Ibid*, January 18, 1877. When the Maharaja of Patiala was nominated a member of the Legislative Council the "Hindu Patriot" wrote : "Not only is such a relationship between Sovereign Princes unknown in civilised history, but would be repelled with indignation if ever attempted to be enforced between any two given Princes of Europe."—The "Hindu Patriot," January 20, 1862. This comment shows that the Indian public considered the princes to be sovereign in 1862 but the British Indian Government had already begun to look upon the princes as subjects.

on the political insight of Sisirkumar Ghosh that he was able to discover the drift of the situation which led successively to the deposition of Malhar Rao, the Gaekwar of Baroda, in 1875, to the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1875-76,[†] the passing of the Royal Titles Bill in 1876 and to the holding of the Darbar in 1877. When the Gaekwar was being tried by a commission on a charge of attempting to poison the Resident, Colonel Phayre, Sisirkumar wrote a series of articles asking for a definition of the prerogatives and privileges of the Indian princes. He held that the Gaekwar was a sovereign prince and as such was "not under the jurisdiction of our Penal Code."⁸⁸ The Royal Titles Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Disraeli on the 17th February, 1876. Sisirkumar saw in the Bill an attempt to divest the Indian princes of their sovereignty. He wrote on the 8th June, 1876: "They can now depose an Indian prince if they choose it, but they cannot do it without rousing an intense clamour. The princes demand an international law, they claim independence and resent interference, but if the British India Government is once acknowledged as the Lord of the Princes, the people will feel less if this acknowledged Lord interfere with his vassals."⁸⁹ That the frank assumption of the position of suzerain was the outcome of the deliberate imperialistic policy of Disraeli is also admitted now by Prof. Ramsay Muir. Sisirkumar's intellect was keen enough to understand clearly this new orientation of the British Imperialism. He wrote that the real object of the Imperial Assemblage was to declare openly that the English are the paramount power in India and that the princes are all vassals.

[†] On the significance of the visit of the Prince of Wales to India, Sisirkumar commented: "The Prince's visit was in fact something like the Digvijaya of the Pandavas prior to the celebration of the Rajshuya jaina. The visit had an object and that object was to prepare the ground for a revolution. All the princes of India were brought together during the Prince's visit to India and called upon to pay homage to the Heir Apparent." But Sisirkumar believed that 'as the Nizam could not be present, his minister Sir Salar Jang was invited to England and induced to promise to send the Nizam to pay his homage to Her Majesty when another befitting occasion should occur.' That occasion was the Imperial Darbar of 1877,—A. B. Patrika, January 18, 1877.

Sisirkumar regretted the loss of the last vestige of independence of the princes on the ground that the desire of Indians to be ruled by princes of their own race was frustrated thereby.⁹⁰

Sisirkumar is of opinion that Imperialism, that is, the subjection of many countries to one, is harmful not only to the conquered but also to the conqueror. He holds that whenever a nation or a people conquered an empire, its decadence began from that time. He shows how the Athenians, Romans and the Mughals lost the finer traits of their character on the assumption of imperial power. According to him, an empire is especially dangerous to the liberty of a democratic people like the English. Those Englishmen who came out to India as officers contract a fondness for the despotic system of government. When they and their sons go back to England and some of them even enter Parliament they vitiate the pure democratic atmosphere of their mother-country by showing their leanings for despotism. Hence he saw in the continuation of holding of India as a mere dependency a danger to the English constitution.⁹¹ He might have derived the idea from Edmund Burke. But these is evidence to show that he was in touch with the contemporary thought on anti-imperialism. In 1880 he gave a summary of an anti-imperialistic speech of Sir Arthur Hobhouse and lent his own support to the arguments of Sir Arthur.⁹² Thus did Sisirkumar anticipate that anti-imperialistic movement in India which has become almost a part of the Congress activity to-day.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL THINKERS AND REFORMERS OF THE PRE-CONGRESS ERA

The impact of western culture and democratic thought produced a few earnest thinkers who were determined to liberalise the very foundation of Indian society. They wanted to extend to women and the depressed classes some of the fundamental rights of human beings like elementary education, barest minimum of necessities for existence, enjoyment of family life and access to public roads, and public offices. These had been denied to many of them for ages. Some of the religious reformers of the sixteenth century had denounced the caste system in strongest terms without producing any tangible results. Swami Narayan of Gujarat (1781-1830), a contemporary of Rammohun Roy founded a religious community, to which he freely admitted the Sudras and Untouchables as disciples. His high caste followers did not mix with them except at the annual convention at which they were treated as equals. Mahatma Ramalingam (1823-1874) of Madras was probably the earliest saint of southern India in the last century to raise his voice against the caste system. He wrote: "Master of the spirit, thou hast taught me thus: 'All the treatises upon the four-fold castes and orders of life are but child's play. They know naught that regard the caste superiority and the colour of the skin'." ¹

There was hardly any movement before the nineteenth century for removing the hardship and privations suffered silently by the women of upper classes. So far as the labouring classes were concerned there was not much difference in the status and privileges of men and women. Raja Rammohun Roy was the first to plead for the removal of the legal and social disabilities which the Hindu women

had to suffer. The success of the agitation for the abolition of the *Suttee* raised the hopes of some educated Hindus. One of them contributed an article to the *Calcutta Monthly Journal* in December 1830, in course of which he pleaded for the intervention of the Government in prohibiting polygamy prevalent amongst the Kulin Brahmanas of Bengal and the practice of some other classes of Brahmanas of demanding dowry in cash for giving girls in marriage. He wrote: "These Kooleens are generally an ignorant, unprincipled and unfeeling race, destitute of property. Their alliances are eagerly sought after, and bought with large sums on account of the honour which their intermarriage with a family is supposed to confer upon it. Thus finding marriage a source of considerable pecuniary gain, they often have a great many wives, who being generally left with their paternal or maternal relations in a state of wretched dependence on them for support have frequently, from a wish to better their condition, been induced to lead immoral lives, or desirous to put an end to their misery, have resorted to the funeral pile of their husbands ; and now that mode of suicide which they considered as authorised by religion has been abolished, they will perhaps have recourse to some other. There are others again, not Kooleens, who are obliged in many cases to pay for wives, and the practice of demanding and receiving considerable sums for daughters or near female relatives given in marriage, has prevailed to an enormous extent. Mercenary motives often make a man blind to the defects and vices of the persons to whom he parts with his female offspring. Money will procure wives to the lame, the blind, the idiot and the lunatic. Can there possibly be a state of society more conducive to the misery of the female sex? Thus united in wedlock, a woman has no taste but of the bitterness of life, and if prevented by the strength of her virtue, or by other considerations from swerving out of the path of chastity, or from laying violent hands upon herself during the life of her husband, after his death she often gladly avails herself of the opportunity thus furnished her under the cover of religion of terminating an existence, which she does not wish to be prolonged, having only learnt to identify it, in a manner, with misery itself."² The editor of *Samachar Darpan* advised the leading members of the Hindu society in Bengal to make joint petition to the

Government for abolishing the system of demanding dowry in cash for girls.³ Both those causes were taken up later on valiantly by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-91), who however was only ten years of age when the comments referred to above were published.

The problem of virgin widows, which appears to be a contradiction in terms to many Europeans, was not confined to Bengal only. Some educated persons moved by humanitarian feelings tried to solve it in Maharashtra and Gujarat. In 1838 a Gujarati teacher named Mehataji Durgaram Mancharam (1809-76) raised his voice and wielded his pen against the cruel treatment meted out to the widows in Hindu society. Some unsuccessful attempts were made at Nagpur and Madras to introduce the remarriage of widows.

In Bombay the earliest champion of widow remarriage was Hari Keshawaji, who belonged to the Kshatri caste and was employed as a translator in the Court of Sadar Adalat in Bombay. In a pamphlet entitled "An Essay on the promotion of Female Education in India" he wrote in 1839* : "She who was originally intended to be the inseparable companion of man and to render him her assistance according to the divine laws, is doomed to spend her days unprofitably in the state of widowhood; disgusted with her gloomy life, with her shaved head, and the continual mournful dress, and her exclusion from the company of married females on the occasion of marriage and such other rejoicings, she either procures the gratification of her evil disposition sinfully and secretly or gives an open vent to her unconquerably bad feelings. She then, separated entirely from her caste, appears in the assembly of other castes or classes of men ; in habit and dress quite opposite to that observed in widowhood. The tongue which was intended to praise God, repeats the profane song ; and those hands which were made for benevolent acts, tune harps for awakening evil desires. If her days are not

* The pamphlet was published from Edinburgh with a preface by John Wilson D. D., President of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society and Missionary of the Church of Scotland. It is preserved in the Library of the Bombay University (No. 105837). The quotation is from p. 9.

devoted to these pleasures she employs herself in performing those devotional austerities which are intended to bring on languor and she mortifies herself by fastings, bathings and going round the Tulsi or pimpal tree for several hours during every day." From another book written by Ganpat Lakshmanji, and published in 1843 by the American Mission Press we learn that Hari Keshawji's Essay also appeared in the *Christian Spectator*.

Ganpat Lakshmanji who wrote his name as Gunput Luxumonjee was educated at the Elphinstone Institution. In May 1841 he wrote a competition essay on the *Promotion of Domestic Reforms among the Natives of India* and got the prize. The way in which Indian manners and customs are referred to, makes one suspect that the writer put himself in the position of an European with a view to pleasing his Examiners, or that some paragraphs were written by a Western writer. Thus the marriage of a girl of five or six with a boy a year or two older than her is thus referred to : "And married how? By consulting her own choice in the adjustment of the matter? No! How then? By bringing the boy into her presence and allowing them both to remain in one another's company so as to acquaint themselves with each other's views, motives and abilities and to be able to judge whether there is a natural harmony and accordance between the tastes and sentiments of both? No! They both are yet too young for that; the whole matter is left to the disposal of the parents themselves, who settle the business either as it suits their own convenience or their present benefit without regard to their daughter's future interests" (p.41). In describing the marriage processions the writer notes that the large number of Indian musicians crowded the street "echoing the air with their discordant tunes as they pass along." (p.43) It is difficult to conceive that an Indian would find the music discordant. In any case Ganpat Lakshmanji presents an excellent picture of a Hindu widow when he writes: "Her head is shaved, and all her rights and privileges as a woman are lost. She eats little, sleeps little, rises very early in the morning and gives herself up to meloncholy thoughts the whole day. She is exposed to the severest privations incident upon her state." He ridicules the idea put forward by the opponents of widow remarriage that if a widow were permitted to marry

again, she would be inclined to murder her own husband in case she does not like him. He states that the root cause of widowhood lay in early marriage. In an age when there was no problem of overpopulation he defended widow marriage on the following ground: "God created woman to be man's help-mate for life, and to fructify unto him children who should be their representatives on earth, and when woman is allowed to remain unmarried after her first husband is dead without children, the benevolent design of Providence is directly opposed. Society also would have been much benefitted by the addition of new numbers which the birth of children may have supplied."³

It is highly interesting to note that nearly thirty years before the publication of Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's book, Ganpat Lakshmanji wrote that at some places Brahmanas married as many as one hundred wives. The three other castes, according to him, looked upon polygamy as a matter of social distinction. He condemned the practice severely. He advocated the diffusion of education amongst women as an effective means of improving their condition in society. In all these directions he anticipated the efforts of Vidyasagar.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-91)

Moved by humanitarian considerations the great Sanskrit scholar, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, tried to remove some of the evil social customs prevalent in the Hindu society.* He studied Sanskrit grammar, literature, Vedanta philosophy, Logic, Astronomy and Hindu Law for more than twelve years in the Sanskrit College and got the coveted title of Vidyasagar, 'the ocean of learning' at the early age of twenty-one. He also studied English literature and philosophy privately. When he was barely 31 years old he became the Principal of the Sanskrit College, Calcutta on the 22nd January, 1851. His earliest effort at social reform was made five months earlier; when his paper on the evils of early marriage was published. In this article he condemned most severely the practice of

* He was not a follower of Raja Rammohun Roy as has been imagined by Charles H. Heimsath in his "Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reforms", p.14.

marrying girls at the age of eight or ten. He tackled the problem from the standpoint of social, hygienic and ethical standpoints. He refused to admit the validity of those Dharma Shastras which prescribed early marriage.

He, however, changed his tactics in January, 1855, when he wrote his first tract on the Marriage of Hindu widows. A great rationalist though he was, he did not try to convince his countrymen of the need of allowing widows to be remarried by mere arguments. He ransacked the whole of the Smriti literature to prove that there is no prohibition of the marriage of widows in it. He published his second tract in October 1855 and the substance of both these was incorporated in the English edition of his book entitled "Marriage of Hindu Widows" in which he proved that he was trying to introduce something which was proper in every respect. He asks: "But how is this to be done? By reasoning alone? No. For it will not be admitted by our countrymen that mere reasoning is applicable to such subjects. The custom must have the sanction of the Sastras; for in matters like this, the Sastras are the paramount authority among Hindus, and such acts only as are conformable to them are deemed proper."⁴ In the Preface to this book he referred to the views held by his adversaries to the effect that he had been influenced more by compassion for the unfortunate widows than by the injunctions of the Sastras. He affirmed: "It is true that I do feel compassion for our miserable widows, but at the same time I may be permitted to state that I did not take up my pen before I was fully convinced that the Sastras explicitly sanction their remarriage. This conviction I have come to, after a diligent, dispassionate and careful examination of the subject and I can now safely affirm, that in the whole range of our original Smritis there is not one single Text which can establish any thing to the contrary."

Vidyasagar first of all draws the attention of his readers to the fact that Manu has stated that the *Dharmas* of different ages are different and then quotes *Parasara Samhita* to the effect that the Dharmas enjoined by Manu are assigned to the *Satya Yuga*; those by Gotama to the *Treta*; those by Sankha and Likhita to the *Dvapara*; and those by Parasara to the *Kali Yuga*. Then he shows that the fourth chapter of

the *Parasara Samhita* states that under the five calamities, it is permissible for women to take another husband. These are (1) on receiving no news of a husband, (2) on his demise (3) on his turning an ascetic (4) on his being found impotent or (5) on his degradation. Parasara further says that if a woman on the demise of her husband observes the *Brahmacharya* she attains heaven after death; if she burns herself at the funeral pyre of her husband she resides in heaven for as many thousands of years as there are hairs on the human body. Vidyasagar opines that as the custom of concremation has been abolished by Government, and as it is extremely difficult for widows to pass their life in *Brahmacharya*, Parasara has prescribed marriage for widows of the *Kali* age. In his Rejoinder to his opponents he elucidated the first point by citing some verses from the *Narada Samhita*, which prescribes that a Brahmana woman should wait eight years for her absent lord, and four years only, if she be childless; then let her marry again. A Kshatriya woman should wait for six years, and, in case she has no issue, for three years only. A Vaisya woman, if she has borne a child, four years, otherwise only two. For a Sudra woman no period is mentioned for which she is to wait for her husband. If it be heard that he is alive, the rule is, that the aforesaid periods are to be doubled; when tidings are not received, the above-mentioned periods are enjoined.

In quoting the scriptures in support of his views, Vidyasagar appears to be preparing the way for the emancipation of women from the thralldom of evil customs. He specifically quotes those verses which allow the dissolution of a marriage contracted under any sort of fraud. Thus he quotes Katyayana, who states that if after wedding, the husband be found to be of a different caste, degraded, impotent, unprincipled, of the same Gotra or family a slave or a valetudinarian, then a married woman should be bestowed upon another, decked with proper apparel and ornaments. He could not find Katyayana's work, but found these verses quoted in the *Nirnaya Sindhu* and *Parasara Bhasya*. Again from the *Udvahatattva* of Raghunath Bhattacharya he quotes two verses of Vasishtha, who holds that a girl, married to a person who is of a low family and conduct, impotent, degraded, epileptic, unprincipled, sickly, a devotee, or of the same

family, is to be taken away from him, which injunction is rightly interpreted by Vidyasagar to mean that she should be married to another person.⁵

Being familiar with the canons of carrying on controversy with opponents, Vidyasagar states fully the objections which have been raised or might be raised against his arguments and then refutes them. The orthodox school tried to show on the basis of injunctions of the *Adi Purana*, *Vrihannaradiya Purana* and the *Aditya Purana* that the remarriage of a married woman, or the giving away of a girl already given, is forbidden in the *Kali* age. Vidyasagar controverts this view on two grounds. First, that according to a dictum of Vedavyasa, when the *Smriti* and the *Purana* contradict each other the *Smriti* is to be taken as superior authority. The positive injunction of *Parasara* allowing widow remarriage is superior to the prohibitory order of the *Puranas*.⁶ Secondly, Vidyasagar shrewdly observes : "Again, in the *Adi Purana* and other works, the remarriage of women in the *Kali yuga* has been generally prohibited, without the specification of any exceptional cases; but *Parasara* points out particular conditions, under which he declares such marriage in that *Yuga* to be canonical. The injunction of *Parasara*, therefore, is a special rule and the general prohibition in the *Adi Purana* and other works applies to all but the five cases specified by *Parasara*. Such is always the case, when there are both general and special injunctions or prohibitions on the same subject."⁷

There is one great difficulty in accepting the interpretation of Vidyasagar. *Madhavacharya*, in his commentary on *Parasara* states that re-marriage of widows has been prescribed for other ages and not for the *Kali* age. Vidyasagar sums up the argument of *Madhavacharya* thus : 'although the *Parasara Samhita* is appropriate to the *Kali yuga* only and although it enjoins the remarriage of females, yet as there appears a prohibition in the *Adi Purana* against the remarriage of women once wedded, in the *Kali Yuga*, the injunction of *Parasara* should be considered not to refer to the *Kali Yuga* but to the preceding *Yugas*. To this line of argument Vidyasagar replied that *Madhavacharya* was illogical and inconsistent. He wrote : "*Madhavacharya* has, however,

reckoned the easily practicable duty of remarriage as a Dharma of the past Yugas, and assigned the remaining two most arduous duties only. (Brahmacharya and concretion) as appropriate to the Kali Yuga. Now, let my readers consider, whether this allotment of Madhavacharya squares with his former exposition, that men in the Kali Yuga not being disposed to observe the Dharmas which are difficult of performance, the avowed object of Parasara is the assignment of the easily practicable Dharmas for men on the Kali Yuga." He strengthens his case by quoting the opinion of Bhattoji Dikshita, who has observed: "It cannot be contended that the Marital Text of Parasara applies to Yugas other than the Kali, for Parasara has compiled his Samhita with the avowed object of declaring the Dharmas to be observed in the Kali Yuga alone." Vidyasagar anticipated the method of research of modern scholars when he further pointed out that the Text, which Madhavacharya declares to have cited from the Adi Purana, is not to be found in that Purana. He then quotes many authorities to show that Madhavacharya has been adversely criticised and, therefore, he is not considered as infallible.

Some of the opponents of Vidyasagar pointed out that Parasara's dictum about remarriage of widows was at variance with the views of Manu, who prohibits the marriage of a betrothed girl on the death of the suitor to whom she had been plighted. Vidyasagar refuses to accept this as a prohibition of widow-remarriage. He quotes a verse from Manu (IX. 175) which contemplates the marriage of widows and states that if a woman, after becoming a widow, or being divorced by her husband, marries again, the son born of her of this marriage is called a *Pannarbhava*. Some Pandits, however, asserted that the *Pannarbhava* was an illegitimate son. Vidyasagar retorted to them: "When Manu and Yajnavalkya have declared the *Pannarbhava* to have a legal right to the heritage and to the performance of the *Sradha*, the assertion of such son's being illegal should be utterly disregarded." He further cites the authority of the Mahabharata to show that the *Pannarbhava* was regarded as an *Aurasa putra* by Arjuna who married the widowed daughter of the Naga King, Airavata.

Vidyasagar then proves that the father can make a gift of his widowed daughter and that the Nuptial texts to be used on the occasion of a second marriage are the same as those that are used on the occasion of the first. In conclusion Vidyasagar states that though widow-marriage is not now sanctioned by custom, yet custom cannot claim to be superior to the clear injunctions of Smritis, which permit the remarriage of widows. He writes in the anguish of his heart : "What a mighty influence is thine, O custom! Inexpressible in words! With what absolute sway dost thou rule over thy votaries! Thou hast trampled upon the Sastras, triumphed over virtue, and crushed the power of discriminating right from wrong and good from evil! Such is thy influence, that what is in no way conformable to the Sastras is held in esteem, and what is consonant to them is set at open defiance. Through thy influence, men, lost to all sense of religion and reckless in their conduct, are everywhere regarded as virtuous and enjoy all the privileges of society, only because they adhere to mere forms; while those truly virtuous and of unblemished conduct, if they disregard those forms and disobey thy authority, are considered as the most irreligious, despised as the most depraved, and cut off from society."

Vidyasagar argues from the scriptures and old commentaries in favour of remarriage of widows in the same way as Raja Rammohun did for the abolition of the *Suttee*. He tries to convince his countrymen as well as the Government that widow-remarriage is permissible by the Sastras. His line of argument is like that of European schoolmen of the middle ages. Like Medhatithi he tries to liberalise social customs by putting new interpretation on the Sastric texts. But in the conclusion of his book he writes like an inspired prophet making a fervent appeal to the people. He now rises to a new moral height, from which he implores the people of India to put an end to cruel and illogical customs. He writes: "Countrymen! how long will you suffer yourselves to be led away by illusions! Open your eyes for once and see, that India, once the land of virtue, is being overflowed with the stream of adultery and foeticide. The degradation to which you have sunk is sadly low. Dip into the spirit of your Sastras, follow its dictates, and you shall be able to remove the foul blot from the face of your country. But unfortunately you are

so much under the domination of long-established prejudice, so slavishly attached to custom and the usages and forms of society, that I am afraid you will not soon be able to assert your dignity and follow the path of rectitude. Habit has so darkened your intellect and blunted your feelings, that it is impossible for you to have compassion for your helpless widows. When led away by the impulse of passion, they violate the vow of widowhood, you are willing to connive at their conduct. Losing all sense of honour and religion, and from apprehensions of mere exposure in society, you are willing to help in the work of foeticide. But what a wonder of wonders! You are not willing to follow the dictates of your Sastras, to give them in marriage again, and thus to relieve them from their intolerable sufferings, and yourselves from miseries, crimes and vices. You perhaps imagine that with the loss of their husbands your females lose their nature as human beings and are subject no longer to the influence of passions. But what instances occur at every step to show, how sadly you are mistaken. Alas! what fruits of poison you are gathering from the tree of life, from moral torpidity and a sad want of reflection."⁸ It is probably from this last sentence that Bankim Chandra got the inspiration to write his famous novel, *Poison-tree*, in which the remarriage of widows has not been depicted with adequate sympathy.

The first Bengali pamphlets of Vidyasagar on widow-marriage created a tremendous stir in the Hindu society. Two thousand copies of the book were sold off in course of a week. Three thousand copies were reprinted and those too were exhausted within a short period. This was an unprecedented thing in the history of the sale of a Bengali book in those days. In course of a few months as many as nine pamphlets were issued by the conservative section of the Hindu society to controvert the arguments of Vidyasagar.* Vidyasagar gave a crushing reply to these pamphlets in his second tract on the widow-marriage issued in October, 1855.

* These were by (1) Shyamapada Nayabhusan of Atpur, corrected by Umakanta Trkalamkara (2) Sashijiban Tarkaratna and Janakijiban Nayaratna (3) Kalidasa Maitra (4) Ramachandra Mitra (5) Madhusudan Smritiratna (6) Pandits of Kashi (7) published by Dharmamarma Prakasika Sabha (8) Pandits under the patronage

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar got the following memorial presented to the Government of India on October 14, 1855:

1. "That by long established custom the marriage of widows among Hindus is prohibited.

2. That, in the opinion and firm belief of your petitioners, this custom, cruel and unnatural in itself, is highly prejudicial to the interests of morality, and is otherwise fraught with the most mischievous consequence to society.

3. That the evil of this custom is greatly aggravated by the practice among Hindus of marrying their sons and daughters at an early age, and in many cases in their very infancy; so that female children not unfrequently become widows before they can speak or walk.

4. That, in the opinion and firm belief of your petitioners, this custom is not in accordance with the Shāstras, or with a true interpretation of Hindu Law.

5. That your petitioners and many other Hindus have no objection of conscience to the marriage of widows, and are prepared to disregard all objections to such marriages, founded on social habit or on any scruple resulting from an erroneous interpretation of religion.

6. That your petitioners are advised that by the Hindu Law, as at present administered and interpreted in the courts of Her Majesty, and the East India Company, such marriages are illegal, and the issue thereof would be deemed illegitimate.

7. That Hindus, who entertain no objections of conscience to such marriages, and who are prepared to contract them notwithstanding social and religious prejudices are by the aforesaid interpretation of Hindu Law prevented therefrom.

8. That in the humble opinion of your petitioners, it is the duty of the legislature to remove all legal obstacles to the escape from a social evil of such magnitude which, though sanctioned by custom, is felt by many Hindus to be a most injurious grievance, and to be contrary to a true interpretation of Hindu Law.

9. That the removal of the legal obstacles to the marriage of Kamal Krishna Dev Bahadur of Sobhabazar (9) Pitambar Kaviratna.

of widows, would be in accordance with the wishes and feelings of a considerable section of pious and orthodox Hindus, and would in no way affect the interests, though it might shock the prejudices of those who conscientiously believe that the prohibition of the marriage of widows is sanctioned by the Shastras, or who uphold it on fancied grounds of social advantage.

10. That such marriages are neither contrary to nature nor prohibited by law or custom in any other country or by any other people in the world.

11. That your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your Honourable Council will take into early consideration the propriety of passing a law (as annexed) to remove all obstacles to the marriage of Hindu widows and to declare the issue of all such marriages to be legitimate."

The Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act, known as Act XV was passed on July 16, 1856. It is gratifying to note that a number of literary men came forward to produce dramas advocating remarriage of widows. The earliest of these was Uma Charan Chatterjee's 'Bidhava-Udbaha,' published in 1855. Next year two dramas were produced on the subject, namely Radha Madhava Mitra's 'Bidhava-monoranjana' and Umesh Chandra Mitra's 'Bidhava-Bibaha.' The latter was staged in April, 1859 at the house of Ramgopal Mallick. It is noteworthy that Keshab Chandra Sen acted as Stage manager at this dramatic performance. It was a real tragedy. The young widow Sulochana committed suicide when she became pregnant. Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar used to shed tears on seeing this tragedy enacted on the stage. In 1857 Jadugopal Chatterjee wrote a drama, called 'Chapala Chitta-Chapalya' and Beharilal Nandi another named 'Bidhava-parinaya-Utsava'. In the eighties, however, a turn in the tide was noticeable. The professional Theatre which came into existence early in the seventies in Calcutta staged several dramas which ridiculed the re-marriage of widows.

Vidyasagar's reforming movement received support from some of the educated leaders of Hindu society all over India. In 1857 one Marathi writer named Babu Padmanji supported

the cause of widow re-marriage in his novel, *Yamuna Paryatan*. Prominent leaders like Juggernath Sunkersett, Dr. Bhau Daji and Nana Moroji came forward with financial help for the publication of this book. In 1860 Sunkersett wrote a letter to the Managing Committee of the 'Buddhi Vardhak Hindu Sabha' pointing out the evil results of the lack of reform permitting young widows to remarry.⁹ In 1864 Jyotiba Govind Phule (1827-90), the eminent champion of the non-Brahmins in Maharashtra succeeded in persuading a Saraswat Brahmin widow to remarry. In 1866 Vishnu Shastri Pandit (1827-76) translated Vidyasagar's book on Widow remarriage into Marathi and started the Bombay Widow Marriage Association. He sought to strengthen the movement by enlisting the support of Sankaracharya of Karver and Sankeshwar, the head of the monastic order in Western India. In 1878 Viralingam Pantulu (1848-1919) started a veritable crusade against enforced widowhood in Madras. He was called Vidyasagar of South India for his reforming zeal. But very little progress could actually be achieved in making the remarriage of widows popular. Ranade admitted to K. Subba Rao in a letter dated November 9, 1894 that there were only 7 cases of widow marriage during the year, 9 the previous year and 75 in all during the last twenty-five years.¹⁰

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar started his campaign against polygamy even before the enactment of the Widow Remarriage Bill. In the Preface to his Bengali book on Polygamy published in the month of Shravana (August), V.S. 1928 (1871 A.D.) he writes that sixteen years ago on behalf of an association called Bandhu-varga-Samavaya Kishory Chand Mitra took the initiative in submitting a memorial to the Indian Legislative Council praying for the prohibition of polygamy by law. In 1857 the memorial for the prohibition of polygamy amongst the Kulin Brahmanas was drafted under the inspiration of Vidyasagar and submitted to the Government under the signature of 25000 persons, the first signatory being the Maharaja of Burdwan. It stated: "The Kulins marry solely for money and with no intention to fulfil any of the duties which marriage involves. The women who are thus nominally married without the hope of ever enjoying the happiness which marriage is calculated to confer particularly

on them, either pine away for want of objects on which to place their affections which spontaneously arise in the heart or are betrayed by the violence of their passions and their defective education into immorality. That the remedy, though obvious and perfectly consistent with the Hindu Law, cannot, in the present disorganised state of Hindu Society, be applied by the force of public opinion, or any other power than that delivered by Legislature."

The outbreak of the Mutiny prevented the Government from considering the memorial. In 1866 Vidyasagar again sent up another petition, signed by 21000 persons, amongst whom we find the names of Maharaja Satis Chandra Roy Bahadur, the Raja of Nadia and the Patron of orthodox Pandits of Nabadwip, Raja Satya Ghosal of Bhukailasa, and Raja Pratap Chandra Sinha of Kandi. It ran as follows:

"That about nine years ago no less than 32 petitions signed by nearly 25000 Hindus of Bengal were presented to the late Legislative Council of India, bringing to the notice of the Council, the grievous and revolting abuse of the practice of polygamy in Bengal and praying for a legislative enactment for the prevention thereof.....Occupying the position which the British Government does in India, it is, your petitioners respectfully submit, its manifest duty to meet the wishes of the people by such legislative and administrative measures as may be deemed necessary for the suppression of any social abuses, which are the remnants of customs neither founded on abstract reason nor on the national religions. And this obligation, it is needless to add, becomes the more imperative when the people as in the present instance, are themselves the most forward in seeking the aid of the Legislature. Your petitioners are not aware of the reasons which influenced the late Legislative Council in not responding to such a large, influential and earnest appeal on an admittedly momentous question of social reformation; but they believe that the disastrous events which shook the foundation of the Empire in 1857, over-shadowed, for the time being, all considerations of internal progress.....It is the fervent hope and prayer of your petitioners that, before your Honour might signalize the close of your long and successful career by emancipating the females of Bengal from the pains, cruelties and attendant crimes of the debasing custom of polygamy."

In 1871 Vidyasagar wrote in the preface to his book on Polygamy, "Under the present state of the country, it is impossible to prevent this wide-spread custom without the aid of legislation." He undertook to write this work in Bengali with a view to inducing the Government to pass a law prohibiting it. He wrote a second treatise on the same subject refuting the arguments adduced by some conservative Pandits. The first work is far superior to the second. The ostensible purpose of writing it was to induce the Government to pass an act prohibiting polygamy indeed. But a careful perusal of the book gives the impression that Vidyasagar was attacking many other social evils like early marriage, dowry, Kulinism and the evil practice of maintaining the son-in-law on one's own house in enforced idleness. He was much more bitter in his attacks now than what he had been while advocating the remarriage of widows.

Vidyasagar displays brilliant power of advocacy in support of the case he has undertaken. He shows that the evils of polygamy cannot be removed by the effort of the Hindu Society, because the Hindus have lost the vigour and organising ability which are needed for success in this direction. Those who were highly enthusiastic in introducing reforms in society when they were students have now become apathetic. Only the raw and inexperienced young students talk of introducing reforms from within the society and not by the help of Government. He assures the Government that they need not entertain any serious apprehension to the effect that the prohibition of polygamy by law will give rise to any violent outbreak amongst the people. The opponents of the abolition of the Suttée had threatened serious consequences in case of Government's interference with the timehonoured practice. But Lord Bentinck was courageous enough to introduce the much needed reform and nothing serious happened in consequence. Vidyasagar urges the Government to show the same boldness and humanitarian spirit in abolishing polygamy. With great persuasiveness he adduces the argument that such a piece of legislation will be in consonance with the purpose for which they have assumed sovereignty in this country. He states that it is said that the

British rulers came here not for achieving selfish ends but with the object of doing good to the people here. The best way of proving this would be to make such laws as would rescue women from the misery and degradation to which they are subjected now. These women have got a special claim to the kind attention of the Government because one belonging to their own sex is on the throne of Great Britain.¹¹ It is the duty of every Government to protect the weak against the strong. Women are proverbially weak and everywhere in the world they are kept in subordination to men, who usually tyrannise over them.¹²

Vidyasagar adduced several arguments to prove that polygamy is not sanctioned by the sacred texts and as such there can be no objection to suppressing it by legislation. Those who are against such enactment may point out that the ancient Indian literature furnishes many examples of Kings having a number of wives. Vidyasagar meets this argument by stating that the kings are not ordinary mortals, that they being powerful may have the liberty of following a code of conduct peculiar to themselves, and that they are considered as above the law. Vidyasagar next makes a devastating attack on Kulinism itself. He shows that there are no real Kulins now. He traces the origin of Kulinism to the orders of King Ballal Sen, who invited the Brahmanas to lunch one day at his place. Those who came at about 1-30 p.m. were given the rank of Kulins, those who arrived at 12-30 were called Srotriyas or second class Brahmanas, and those who came at noon were awarded minor rank. He explained the reason for this gradation by stating that an earnestly devout Brahmana takes long hours in performing his religious duties and as such he is bound to be late in attendance.¹³ A Kulin was permitted to marry the daughter of a Srotriya but if they marry their daughter to a Srotriya's son, they would be degraded to Vamsaja, that is, a third rate Brahmana. As many of them could not afford to secure a Kulin for their daughters, they lost their Kulinhood in course of time. He adduces proof of this fact from the books on genealogy, according to which Deviyara Ghatak classified the Kulins into 36 grades on the basis of their faults and not of merits. Those who were guilty of marrying the daughter of a Vamsaja, and those whose daughters had been forcibly

taken away by the Moslems were placed in the Phulia Mel. Vidyasagar states that the Kulins belonging to the Phulia Mel and Khardaha Mel have lost their Kulinhood and yet they arrogate to themselves highest honour and oppressed others.

Incidentally Vidyasagar opines that according to Manu (IX. 89) one should never give his daughter in marriage to an unqualified person though she might have to stay in her father's house unmarried throughout her life. The Kulins do not get qualified husband for their daughter; they, therefore, marry a number of them to an old person, whose sole qualification is his supposed pedigree. The father of the daughter does not take into consideration the welfare of his daughter. In the anguish of his heart Vidyasagar writes that these Kulins do not mind if their daughter being nominally married live in adultery. They devote their energy in keeping up appearances only. Vidyasagar narrates an amusing story of a Kulin who never cared to enquire as to how his unmarried youthful daughters fared in their maternal uncle's house, where they were reared up. Then one day having learnt that they have been abducted, he bemoaned his lot and cried piteously for the loss of prestige. At last he traced the abductor and induced him to lend him the girls for three months on promise of a handsome amount. After a diligent search for more than two months he was able to arrange a nominal marriage of both the girls to an old man of sixty. The bridegroom knew the antecedents of the girls but kept quiet till the auspicious moment of marriage. Then he disclosed that he could not marry such girls without a heavy monetary compensation. The Kulin had to procure the money by mortgaging his land. The bridegroom went away satisfied with the money but left his wives to their fate. After a few days the girls joined back their abductor. With grim humour Vidyasagar states that everyone concerned in this event felt happy at this turn of affairs.¹⁴

Turning to the Kulin Kayasthas of Bengal, Vidyasagar exposes the evils of a system named *Adyarasa*, according to which a second grade Kayastha called Moulik acquires great merit by marrying his daughter to the eldest son of a Kulin Kayastha. But the latter is prohibited from taking the

daughter of a Moulik Kayastha as his first wife. Those who are wealthy Moulik Kayastha induce the Kulin's son to desert his first wife and live in idleness in the house of the father of his second wife. The reason for doing so was that the eldest male issue of the marriage got the rank of a Kulin and as such the Moulik takes all the precautions against the Kulin's first wife having any issue. Thus for satisfying an idle vanity the Moulik Kayastha used to prevent the unfortunate Kulin's daughter from meeting her husband. The lot of the son-in-law who had to spend his days in enforced idleness at the house of his father-in-law was equally miserable.

Some opponents of the proposed legislation said that the prohibition of polygamy would produce grave discontent amongst the Moslems. Vidyasagar replied that his proposal was a modest one, limiting its scope to the Hindus of Bengal. The learned Pandit collected the names and addresses of 133 Kulin Brahmanas of the Hooghly district and printed these in his book with their age and number of wives. From this list we learn that one Bholanath Banerjee, aged 55 had 80 wives, Bhagaban Chatterjee (64) had 72, Purnachandra Mukherjee (55) 62 wives. A young man of 20 named Durga Charan Banerjee had 16 wives.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee wrote a trenchant criticism against Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's second book on Polygamy. To him Vidyasagar's attempt to controvert the opinion of Taranath Tarka-vacaspati and other upholders of the right of Hindus to marry as many wives as one likes appeared futile and meaningless. According to him, no sane man would say that polygamy is a good system. He questioned also the accuracy of the list of polygamous persons culled by Vidyasagar. He condemned polygamy but did not like to stop it by legislation.¹⁵

Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was a great pioneer in humanitarianism in India. But he was at the same time attached to the rules prescribed in the Dharma Sastra. He was placed in a difficult position when the Government asked his opinion regarding the Age of Consent Bill. At the suggestion of Vidyasagar the Government had incorporated in the Indian Penal Code a provision to the effect that sexual intercourse with a girl below the age of ten by her husband

was to be regarded as rape. Dayaram Gidumal published a pamphlet in the eighties of the last century proposing to raise the age of consent to 12.

Vidyasagar was opposed to the Age of Consent Bill, 1889, because he held that the *Garbhādhana* ceremony was binding upon the Hindus and as there was no certainty as to the age of the girl at which she would have her first menses, the bill would interfere with the religious custom of the Hindus. But he was not opposed to social legislation by the foreign government, nor to the limiting of the age of girls to a certain minimum. He wrote : "I should like the measure to be so framed as to give something like an adequate protection to child-wives, without in any way conflicting with any religious usage. I would propose that it should be an offence for a man to consummate marriage before his wife has had her first menses. As the majority of girls do not exhibit that symptom before they are 13, 14 or 15, the measure I suggest would give larger, more real, and more extensive protection than the bill. At the same time such a measure could not be objected to on the ground of interfering with a religious observance.The religious prohibition would be made more effective, if it was embodied in a penal law." Like Lokmanya Tilak, Vidyasagar admitted the necessity of controlling consummation of marriage below the age of puberty, but opposed the fixing of the age of consent arbitrarily at twelve. Unlike Vidyasagar Tilak advocated social propaganda and not legislation as the remedy for the evil of early consummation of marriage.

Vidyasagar met with nothing but disappointment in his attempts at social reform. Widow remarriage never became popular; the Government refused to abolish polygamy by legislation but contrary to the advice of the great Pandit, the Age of Consent Bill was passed in the same year in which he died. It must be admitted, however, that Vidyasagar was able to awaken the social conscience of all classes of Indians.

Keshab Chandra Sen (1838—1884)

Keshab Chandra Sen was essentially and primarily a

great religious teacher. Zeal for religious reform impelled him to propound some social and political ideas, which produced far-reaching effects in India. He became a member of the Brahmo Samaj in 1860, when he was barely twenty-two years of age. In 1866 he undertook a preaching tour throughout northern and western India. In 1868 he again visited Bombay. At that time the *Bombay Gazette* could discern that he had initiated a movement whose object was "to unify the manifold races of India—to give them one common religion, and common social purpose, and to make them one common nation. The step in brief is from unity in religion, in social economy, in national feeling, to a common political creed and the achievement of a political destiny".¹⁶ J. N. Farquhar also corroborates this view when he writes : "He (Keshab) played a large part in rousing that patriotic feeling which is today so powerful in every part of India. His lectures glow with a peculiar when his subject leads him to consider the future of India".¹⁷

Keshab Chandra firmly believed that social and political life was founded upon the character of the people and that character was founded upon religion. Unlike the leaders of political associations he held that the way to India's social and political advance lay through a reform of her religion. In his lecture on the Religious and Social Reformation he said that if the people accept radical religious reformation, questions of social reform would no longer appear to them as matters of worldly expediency, but these would come upon them with all the weight of moral obligation. He further explained : "To believe in the Fatherhood of God is to believe in the brotherhood of man; and whoever, therefore, in his own heart and in his own house worships the True God daily must learn to recognise all his fellow countrymen as brethren. Caste would vanish in such a state of society; in such an enthusiastic religious state of fellowship caste would die of itself".¹⁸ He reminded his audience that even in social reform moral courage and enthusiasm were necessary, because these could be engendered by true faith only.

As a true follower of Raja Rammohun Roy, Keshab Chandra believed that the rule of the British Government over India was ordained by God. Rammohun concluded his

Appeal to the Christian Public "by offering unexpectedly delivered the disposer of the events of this universe, for having unexpectedly delivered the country from the long-continued tyranny of its former rulers, and placed it under the government of the English—a nation who are not only blessed with the enjoyment of civil and political liberty but also interest themselves in promoting liberty and social happiness, as well as free inquiry into literary and religious subjects, among those nations to which their influence extends."¹⁹ Keshab Chandra was loyal to the backbone. He considered the British rule as a divine dispensation. Along with many other articles of faith in the Brahmo Samaj Mahadeva Govinda Ranade appears to have imbibed this idea from Rammohun and Keshab Chandra and Gokhale, his political disciple made it the very basis of his political philosophy. Mahatma Gandhi, who acknowledged Gokhale as his *Guru*, exhorted the rich people to consider themselves as Trustees for the poor. Keshab Chandra was the first Indian to use the Trusteeship concept with reference to the Government of India. On May 24, 1870 Keshab Chandra said to an audience in England : "It is my firm conviction that you Englishmen stand there in India merely as trustees. You hold India on trust, and you have no right to say that you will use its property, its riches, or its resources, or any of the privileges which God has given you, simply for the purpose of your own selfish aggrandizement and enjoyment. You are accountable to that God who has placed India in your hands and if there are sins (?) in your administration, it is your duty to blot them out as soon as you see them, and believe them to be evil. You are accountable to God for those millions of souls that have been placed in your hands as a sacred trust. You cannot hold India for the interest of Manchester, nor for the welfare of any other section of the community here, nor for the advantage of the merchants who go there and live as birds of passage for a time, and never feel an abiding interest in the country, because they really cannot do so. If you desire to hold India, you can only do so for the good and welfare of India".²⁰ This is the voice of a Prophet urging the rulers to do their duty to the ruled. Dadabhai Naoroji expressed similar hopes and beliefs in the righteousness of Englishmen, and appealed to their conscience for redressing the grievances.

It is interesting to note that in his lecture entitled 'England's duties to India,' Keshab Chandra Sen mentioned only five items, of which only one may be classified as political. These were adequate grants for general education, for female education, restoration of State scholarship for education abroad, throwing open of high appointments to Indians and, lastly, the closing of traffic in liquor. He does not refer to the enlargement of the Legislative Councils or introduction of the principle of representative government, not to speak of responsible government. In his lecture on "Asia's Message to Europe", Keshab Chandra pleaded in 1883 for the extension of franchise irrespective of property and literary qualifications. He said : "The highest form of government is synonymous with the most thoroughgoing and comprehensive representation you are ever extending the franchise : you take in thousands to-day, tens of thousands to-morrow, and millions the next day, till you include the very humblest and the lowest of the population, and give the dumb and the down-trodden voice in Parliament. If you have even the semblance of good government, if you care for real political prosperity, surely you cannot reject the humbler classes; you cannot extinguish them because of their poverty, you cannot crush them into atom because of their ignorance. There is everywhere a cry for justice, justice to the weak and powerless, justice to the working classes. Not to listen to that cry would be a disaster". (Lectures in India, 1904 ed., p.69). Here, however, he was definitely referring to the condition in England and not to India. The sentence he uttered next proves that conclusively. He said : "And so in your House of Commons you include diverse conditions of life and diverse creeds; you make the representatives of wealth and poverty, of princely fortune and humble labour; and even men of such opposite persuasions as Roman Catholics and Protestants sit together, and by mutual consultation and co-operation benefit their common country". This was mainly because of the fact that he did not consider his mission to be political at all. He knew that the British Indian Association was putting forward political demands. Then again it was his firm conviction that it would be difficult to resist the demands for self-government when education would be diffused amongst Indian citizens belonging to both the sexes. But he thought that the educated

people would never become disloyal or, in other words would never try to cut off the connection with the United Kingdom. He said : "If you desire to make the people loyal, you must educate them. A school or college is a better and stronger safeguard of the power and prosperity of the British nation than a citadel or fortress".²¹ He opposed the suggestion that the funds allocated to higher education should be diverted to primary education. He considered the education of the poor ignorant masses as essential for the prosperity of India, and especially for the eradication of idolatry and superstition. He did not like that a special education cess should be levied on the zamindars, because that would be, in his opinion, a violation of the terms of Permanent Settlement, which he considered to be sacrosanct. Nor would he agree to the enhancement of the rate of tuition fees. He did not make any positive suggestion regarding the method of raising funds for financing the primary education of the masses, because he frankly admitted that he did not pretend to dive into politics. To him the appointment of larger number of Indians to higher posts was chiefly a means of inducing Indian young men to take to higher education, though he was not oblivious of the fact that employment of Indians would mean cheaper administration. He said that the highly educated Indians "will see that the Government really appreciate their endeavours after knowledge and truth, and that the Government is really a paternal government, trying to reward merit".

To Keshab Chandra female education was a means of eradicating the prejudices and iniquitous institutions of India. If the males alone be educated, a gulf of separation would arise between the two sexes in every household. But if both the males and the females were educated, the husband and the wife would try to bring their influence to bear on the work of purifying all the domestic and social customs and institutions of the country.

In another lecture, delivered at the Victoria Discussion Society on August 1, 1870 Keshab Chandra gave a pathetic description of the condition of Indian women belonging to the upper classes. Just a year before the publication of Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's book on Polygamy Keshab Chandra told his British audience that some Brahmanas had as many

as seventy wives and that they used to carry with them a bundle of papers on which the names of their wives and those of their relatives along with their address were written. One day a boy accosted an old Brahmana as his father and the latter indignantly denied the relationship but on the insistence of the boy he referred to his papers and found that the statement was true. He also informed the British audience that the marriage of a girl of five to an old man of eighty was common in Bengal and in other parts of the country. Such a marriage was sure to make the girl a virgin widow. And he emphatically stated that once a widow, she was condemned to remain a widow for ever. He pleaded : "Immediate reform is needed. Widows must be allowed to remarry, and to have the privileges which are accorded to them in other countries. They must not be made to submit by force and pressure to a state of things which they do not themselves like, but which, for the sake of attaining a false heaven, they so often submit to. The custom of early marriage ought to be abolished, and men and women should be permitted to marry only when they are of marriageable age. Bigamy and polygamy should be suppressed, if possible by legislative enactment".²² He did not tell his audience that in 1856 a law had already been passed enabling widows to contract a marriage, but very few had come forward to avail of this permissive legislation.

While he was in favour of effecting social reform through legislative measures, he did not like to see a wholesale transformation of Indian society on the model of the Western countries. He said : "The growth of society must be indigenous, native and natural. Foreign customs must not be forced upon us. Our women have elements of character which are really noble and good, and these ought to constitute the basis upon which we should raise the superstructure of reformed female society". It is, however, curious to note that Keshab Chandra said that a thousand Hindu houses were open to receive and welcome English governesses, who should impart unsectarian and sound liberal education.²³ Probably he suggested this step with a view to making Bengali ladies as much progressive as the ladies of Bombay. He quoted with approval the remark of Miss Carpenter to the effect that Bombay was far ahead of Bengal in the matter of female education.²⁴

Keshab Chandra Sen delivered an important speech on the 'Reconstruction of Native Society' at the annual meeting of the Bengal Social Science Association on March 14, 1872. In it he pointed out that English education, the Christian Missionaries, the Brahmo Samaj and the acts passed by the Indian Legislature were the powerful agencies which brought about the reconstruction of Indian society. But he regretted that the attacks on the caste system had not proved very successful. Another feature which caused him considerable pain was the lack of moral training in educational institutions. He found that a large amount of hypocrisy, dishonesty, moral imbecility, and insincerity had entered into the character of his countrymen in his own generation. These defects could be remedied only by imparting sound moral training in schools and colleges. He suggested that all schoolmasters who did not set good examples in the direction of moral character should be asked to retire immediately.²⁵ He pleaded for the education and emancipation of women specially. But he was not in favour of violent changes in this matter. According to him, "for a century at least our attention and energy should be directed chiefly to Zenana Education". He could not foresee that in less than a hundred years India would have a Prime Minister, a Chief Minister, Governors, Vice-Chancellors, Legislators and Members of Foreign Service and Administrative Service from amongst women.

Keshab Chandra tried to translate into action the theories he propounded. His own life set a brilliant example before his countrymen. He purified and elevated all who came in contact with him. He established the Indian Reform Association for the advancement of the social, moral and religious well-being of the people. It had five branches, one each for the improvement in the condition of women for diffusion of education, production of cheap literature, promotion of temperance and practising of charity.

The cause of temperance was so dear to him that he gave us his usual mode of extending loyal support to the Government when he referred to their excise policy. He said that the demoralising liquor traffic "was fast devouring the souls and bodies of my countrymen". He further observed : "And here I would ask, is not this liquor traffic carried on in India

simply, solely, and exclusively for the sake of revenue? It is simply a question of money."²⁶ It may be presumed that the Indian National Congress imbibed its zeal for the policy of prohibition in the last years of the nineteenth century from the preachings of Keshab Chandra Sen.

The credit of having an Asia-wide outlook also to Keshab Chandra Sen. It is remarkable that while Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was preaching devotion only to Mother Bengal and Hem Chandra Banerjee, a prominent poet of those days was calling Japan a barbarous but independent nation, Keshab Chandra was harping on the unity of Asian culture and civilisation. In his lecture on 'Asia's Message to Europe' delivered in 1883 he said : "From one end of Asia to the other, I boast of a vast home, a wide nationality and an extended kinship...To me the dust of Asia is far more precious than gold and silver".²⁷ He took pride in the fact that Asia had nursed Jesus and Buddha, Zoroaster and Confucius. He appealed to the conscience of Europe not only for the protection of India but also for the well-being of China. In his lecture on the Liquor traffic in India he requested the British Government in 1870 to "abolish that iniquitous opium traffic which kills thousands of the poor Chinese people."²⁸

In the heyday of British Imperialism he raised his voice against the tendency of some nations swallowing the rest. He wrote in 1883, "England may wish that all Europe should be Anglicised, France may wish to make all Europe French and Germany German; America may desire to see the whole world Americanised. But Providence favours not such fatal fancies and annihilating propensities of any single Power. Heaven abhors monopoly, and vouchsafes unto each individual and nation freedom of action and diversities of operation, so that each may grow with all freshness and variety of natural growth."²⁹ From the analogy of the State he drew an idealistic picture of nations living in perfect amity and concord. "The State," he explained, "is a vast and complicated machinery, in which numberless wheels of various sizes and shapes are ever moving, each in its proper place, and working harmoniously towards a common end. This is the perfection of consolidated fellowship. Here is no sectarianism, no exclusiveness, no attempt to ignore or destroy each other. All

classes of the community, from the highest to the lowest, recognise and respect each other. Judges and magistrates, merchants and traders, landholders and peasants, capitalists and labourers, the learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, all contribute to the welfare and progress of the State. The aristocracy and working classes are alike essential to the life and comfort of the body politic. The exclusion of even the humblest section of the community would be the death of the State. And when many such governments administer their respective affairs side by side, there springs up an international amity and harmony in which the life and growth of each find safeguard." But Keshab Chandra Sen did not believe in mere political machinery. As an intensely devout religious preacher he pinned his faith on a spiritual alliance between the East and the West. He hoped and prayed for an international federation built on no other ground than that of Christ's atonement. This sort of appeal, however, failed to evoke any response either among the young nationalists of India or amongst the power-intoxicated western nations who refused to welcome the Asiatics as their equals.

Jyotiba Govinda Phule (1827-90)

Vs.

Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar (1850-1882)

Several earnest social reformers arose in western Indian in the third quarter of the last century. The most notable of these was Jyotiba Govinda Phule whose efforts for ameliorating the condition of women and the depressed classes have secured for him the title of Mahatma.³⁰ He advocated the cause of widow-remarriage and denounced polygamy. He was the pioneer of Non-Brahmin movement, which became a powerful force in Indian society and politics after the first World War. Like Keshab Chandra Sen he believed that the British rule was divinely ordained but the reason he assigned for it was different. He wrote, "The Creator has purposely sent the English people to this country to liberate the disabled Sudras from the slavery of the crafty Aryas."³¹ He started a paper called *Dinabandhu* in 1871 for espousing the cause of the oppressed people. In 1873 he organised the *Satyashodhak Samaj* with the object of saving

"the lower castes from the hypocritical Brahmanas and their opportunistic scriptures". He had already prepared the ground for this organisation by publishing in 1872 his work entitled *Gulamgiri*, which, significantly enough, was dedicated to the Negroes of America. In it he said that the Brahmins were much worse than the British as exploiters. He could not find much evidence of the exploitation by the British. The caste system which inflicted great hardship on the non-Brahmanas was the creation of the Brahmins, and not of the British. The British, however, were indirectly responsible for the oppression, because they appointed officers mostly from the Brahmins and these Brahmins abused their official position for promoting their own interest. Thus the Brahmins even in the British age exercised tyrannical power, even though they were mere instruments of the British administration.³² Phule went so far as to advise the depressed classes to dissociate themselves from the political movement ushered in by the Brahmins. He argued that as the British were the real benefactors of these classes, and desired their social emancipation, they should not take any part in activities which might be detrimental to the British rule in India.

Phule himself belonged to the caste of gardeners, which was branded as an inferior caste by the so-called upper classes. He looked upon the Christian missionaries as apostles of social equality and freedom. These missionaries, according to him, were spreading the idea that all men being children of God should be treated as equal and that no section of the society had any right to claim social superiority over others. He gratefully acknowledged that he himself had imbibed the spirit of equality from the Christian missionaries. With a view to uplifting the down-trodden classes he started a school for the children of the untouchables in 1852, when he was only twenty-five years of age. This was the first institution of its kind in any part of India. He took interest in spreading education amongst girls and organised a Girls' School at Poona in about 1850. He was a true Humanist. His sympathy went to all, irrespective of their origin and creed. In 1863 he set up the Home for the prevention of Infanticide with a view to protecting the illegitimate children of unfortunate widows. He used to receive financial assistance from the Christian

missionaries in running the schools for the Untouchables. His traducers said that he had become a Christian. This is stoutly denied by his biographer, but the mere rumour was enough to make him unpopular. He suffered the usual fate of pioneers in social reform. He could not find any great body of followers during his life-time. The non-Brahmin castes were still steeped in the darkness of ignorance and they were too disorganised to stand up against the power and influence of the Brahmins. But it is significant that some of his followers became responsible for the organisation of parties of peasants and workers professing socialistic ideas. But Phule himself did not subscribe to any of the principal tenets of socialism excepting social equality.

It is worth noting in this connection that Vishnu Krishna-sastribuwa Chiplunker, the most powerful writer in Maharashtra, propagated ideas diametrically opposite to those of Phule. At the age of twenty-four, in 1874, he started his *Nibandhamala* one year after the foundation of Phule's *Satyashodhak Samaj*. In the very first essay of the *Nibandhamala* he pointed out the following disadvantages of the foreign domination—"It has resulted in all-round deterioration; politically, economically and socially. Our learning is superficial and we have lost our faith in religion. We have lost the sense of initiative whether in individual or public life. The thesis that we are incapable of enjoying freedom and that there is no other alternative but the British rule, if we are to achieve progress, is false," "People who became habituated to subjection suffer the loss of self-respect and courage, and our country has reached the *nadir* in these virtues at the present moment." He dilated on the true functions of the Government and boldly asserted that the British Government in India discharge little of these functions. He wrote : "The Government should protect their subjects, lead them towards the way of progress, undertake steps so that the country may prosper and create conditions of mutual goodwill among the various communities. But such a policy is not evident in actual practice". He threw an indirect hint that the discontent of the people might lead to revolution. "A government can function smoothly only so long as the subjects are contented; if the people become discontented and nurse a

sense of injury in their minds no one can say what might happen. One need not emphasize the advisability of immense caution where a mere handful have to rule over crores of people." Dr. V. M. Bhat states in his *History of Abhinava Bharat* that the essays of Chiplunkar "roused revolutionary tendencies in the minds of the younger generation."

Chiplunkar did not believe that social reform must precede political reform. He heaped ridicule on those who held that unless we adopted reforms like widow remarriage and abolished child marriage and the caste system, it was futile to make efforts for the political regeneration of our country. He held that the elimination of foreign rule would pave the way for the solution of social problems.

CHAPTER IX

POLITICAL THOUGHT OF BANKIM-CHANDRA*

(1838-1894)

I. Introduction

In the history of western political thought Machiavelli is regarded as the prophet and preacher of the principles of nationalism and patriotism. In the history of the political thought of modern India Bankimchandra holds a position analogous to that of Machiavelli. Like the great Florentine statesman, Bankimchandra too held patriotism as the first principle of his political philosophy. But Bankimchandra's political philosophy is based on such high ethical conceptions that it would be nothing less than sacrilege to utter his name in the same breath with that of Machiavelli. Moral virtues, according to Machiavelli, are not essential to or conditions of political virtues. Moral judgments are wholly subordinate in Machiavelli's political philosophy to the exigencies of political action and welfare. The whole basis of his point of view is summed up in these dictates of unscrupulous patriotism:

* Political ideas of Bankimchandra are to be found in the following essays, novels etc :— (1) *A Popular Literature for Bengal*, 1870; (2) *Bangadarshaner Pratham Suchana*, 1872; (3) *Bharatvarsha Paradin, Kano?* 1872; (4) *Bangadesher Krishak*, 1872; (5) *Swadhinata O Paradinata*, 1873; (6) *Samya*, 1873-75; (7) *Kamalakanter Daftar*, 1873-76; (8) *Banglar Itihas*, 1874; (9) *Bangla Shashaner Kal*, 1874; (10) *Bahubal O Bakyabal*, 1877; (11) *Manushatya Ki?* 1877; (12) *Lokshiksha*, 1878; (13) *Banglar Itihas Sambandhe Kaekti Katha*, 1180; (14) *Banglar itihaser Bhagnangsa*, 1882; (15) *Anandamath*, 1882; (16) *Devichaudhurani*, 1883; (17) *Dharmatattva*, from 1884 in *Navajiban*; (18) *Krishnacharitra*, 1886.

"Where the safety of one's country is at stake, there must be no consideration of what is just or unjust, merciful or cruel, glorious or shameful; on the contrary, everything must be disregarded save that course which will save her life and maintain her independence." In his "Krishnacharitra" and "Dharmatattva" Bankimchandra preached that politics and ethics are one and the same thing. Starting with the natural family affections, he aimed at the ultimate goal of working fellow-feeling into the whole fabric of human society. He advocated patriotism, not because it is good in itself, but because, it is the best way of doing service to the whole world.

With Bankim, the concept of duty is decidedly predominant over the concept of right. He does not lay much stress on the rights of the individual, but insists on the performance of duty, which would secure not only good government but also promote Dharma. We cannot, therefore, gather from his philosophy any definite theory of law and the state.

He had very little faith in government as an agency of promoting general welfare. In removing abuses and effecting social reform he relied on social sentiment rather than on legal compulsion. A man is free to observe or to violate the dictates of propriety, but he has society at large to face; even a man of power cannot escape the indictment of social ostracism. Hence, in his attempt to ameliorate the condition of the peasants of Bengal he appealed to the social sentiment of the Zamindars rather than to the government for their legal protection.

According to Bankim, a good people is the foundation of a good government. He seeks, therefore, to inculcate political capacity, political habits, and political morality in the Bengali people. He did not believe in any short-cut to political power. So he looked down upon the political agitation, carried on by a few men, educated in the western fashion, through the Press and the platform, with supreme contempt. He realised clearly the unreality of such a political movement. The agitation was carried on mainly in the English language, which was quite unintelligible to the people,¹ the political propaganda was carried on in towns, while the masses lived in villages,² the grim resolve and the spirit of self-sacrifice which are the two essential elements in the struggle for

securing good government were entirely lacking in the self-constituted leaders of the people. Over and above these, there was a wide gulf of separation between the uneducated masses and the superficially educated classes in ideas, thoughts, feelings and the manner of living.³ He ridiculed the very idea of carrying on political agitation. Sir Ashutosh Chaudhuri is credited with coining the telling phrase that 'a subject nation has no politics'. But long before him Bankimchandra said that a nation which was conquered by seventeen soldiers can have no politics at all. The only politics which is suited to the country is begging. So he observed humorously that politics is a subject fit for cultivation by the title-holders, flatterers, deceivers, beggars and editors.⁴ In another place, he remarked that the educated classes think that to abuse the English anyhow is the height of politics.⁵ He was sick of talks and incessant talks of the political agitators. Through the speech of an imaginary bee he instructed the Bengali people to gather honey and to use stings, instead of wasting energy in talks and mere talks.⁶ Bankimchandra had no patience with the virulent and often meaningless attack of the Indian newspapers on the Government. He wrote a brilliant caricature of the type of criticism levelled against the British Indian administration in an article in the *Bangadarshan*, entitled the "Varsha-Samalochana". It is even alleged that he suggested to the Government the suppression or censorship of newspapers, conducted by Indians.*

This scornful attitude of Bankimchandra towards the contemporary political agitation is solely due to the idealism which he entertained about the national movement. This idealism, coming in contact with the shallow agitation, met with a rude shock. So, with a view to draw the attention of

* *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Sept. 28, 1873:

"Babu Bankimchandra Chatterjee is reported to have said that much of the general feeling of distrust towards the Government which has often been the subject of comment is due to the action of the native Press".....Sisirkumar went so far as to attribute a motive to Bankimchandra: "Babu Bankimchandra draws but Rs. 600 per mensem and already his zeal has met with the approbation of His Honour, and it is to be expected that a promotion would increase his zeal tenfold."

his countrymen to the fundamental problems of national regeneration he poured forth abuses on the agitation conducted through the Press and the platform.

II. His Method

Bankimchandra presented his political philosophy as a part of the philosophy of Dharma, which can be imperfectly translated as Religion. He interpreted the Dharma from the Hindu philosophy, in the light of the empirical, utilitarian and positivist philosophy of Bacon, Bentham, Mill and Comte. He was the first graduate of the Calcutta University and as such had the advantage of high education in western literature, history, law and philosophy. He kept the habit of diligent study even in the midst of his busy official career.⁷ His writings show that he was thoroughly conversant with the works of Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hume, Laplace, Baine, Bentham, John Stuart Mills, Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Auguste Comte, Lecky and Buckle. But none exerted a greater influence on him than John Stuart Mill. Bankimchandra told Srishchandra Majumdar in 1884 that at one time Mill had exerted a very great influence on his mind, but he became free from it later on.⁸

Along with western philosophy, Bankimchandra made a close study of ancient Indian literature and philosophy. He lived in an age, when the reaction against the wholesale imitation of the Western fashion had already begun. The publication of the *Bangadarshan* (1872) almost synchronises with the preaching of the lofty spiritual ideals of Hindu culture and religion from different angles of vision by Ramkrishna Paramahansa, Bhudev Mukhopadhyay and Rajnarayan Bose, Bankimchandra was not wholly immune from the influence of the prevailing spirit of the Hindu revival. It was this spirit which inspired him to show the superiority of the Hindu ideals over the western. His satires and gibes against the European civilisation were also the outcome of the psychological atmosphere of the time. But he never surrendered himself slavishly to the dictates of the Hindu scriptures. He accepted only that much of the Hindu religion and philosophy, which appeared to him to be reasonable. Hence Rabindranath observes that the real hero

of Bankim's *Krishna-Charitra* is not Krishna but the Rationalism of Bankim.⁹ It was this blending of reverence for the ancient Indian culture with rationalism which led Bankim to interpret the old Indian ideals in the light of the utilitarian and positivist philosophy. But it must be remembered that though Bankimchandra was influenced by contemporary English and French philosophy, he was as much critical of it as he was critical of the injunctions of the Shastras.

Utilitarianism, as explained by Bentham and Mill, appealed so strongly to the mind of Bankim that he took infinite trouble to show that Srikrishna, the greatest representative of the Hindu ideal, was always inspired by the utilitarian motive. But at the same time, he pointed out the shortcomings of the utilitarian philosophy. According to him, the mistake committed by the utilitarians is that they think that the whole of Dharma is contained in Utilitarianism. As a matter of fact, it is only a part of Dharma, inasmuch as it seeks to do good to the greatest number and not to all. The essence of Dharma, according to him, is equal regard for all.¹⁰ In his views on the nature of man he differs fundamentally from Bentham. According to Bentham, man is fundamentally selfish; while Bankimchandra recognises compassion as an inherent faculty of man.¹¹ Moreover, he held that "Man is by instinct a poet and an artist. The passionate yearning of the heart for the ideal in beauty, in power and in purity must find an expression in the world of the Real."¹²

Bankimchandra was also captivated by the brilliant exposition of the Religion of Humanity by Auguste Comte. He took this as his ideal in his explanation of "Dharmatattva" and presented a concrete example of it in the character of Krishna. Like Comte, Bankimchandra too maintains that Dharma is the harmonious development of all our physical and mental faculties. But the views of the two differ fundamentally in one respect—that is, the attitude towards God. According to Comte, "it is requisite that our minds should conceive a power without us, so superior to ourselves as to command the complete submission of our entire life."¹³ But Bankimchandra conceived God in every animate

being. He also rejected the scientific paternalism of Comte's politics.

From John Stuart Mill, Bankim got that Individualism, which admitted of the necessity of social control in particular cases. It was Mill again who inspired Bankim to look with horror at the tyranny of the majority and to advocate the equal rights of women with men. The theory of 'unearned increment' propounded by Mill and the foundation of the Land Tenure Reform Association by him in 1870 probably induced Bankim to wield his pen against the Zamindars on behalf of the poor peasants. But even this political Guru of Bankim could not exact from his disciple an unswerving allegiance. Bankim severely criticised Mill for the latter's agnostic views on religion.¹⁴

Bankim's views on religion really mark him as an independent thinker and form the very basis of his political philosophy. Bankim wrote: "With other peoples, religion is only a part of life; there are things religious and there are things lay and secular. To the Hindu his whole life was religion. To other peoples, their relations to God, to the spiritual world, are things sharply distinguished from their relations to man and to the temporal world. To the Hindu, his relations to God and his relations to man, his spiritual life and his temporal life, are incapable of being so distinguished. They form one compact and harmonious whole to separate which into its component parts is to break the entire fabric."¹⁵

Bankimchandra held the post of a Deputy Magistrate and, as such, he must have often felt himself handicapped in giving expression to his political ideas freely. In reading his essays one cannot avoid thinking that the writer is using a good deal of circumspection in expressing his thought. When asked to contribute some articles in *Mookerjee's Magazine*, he wrote on the 28th December, 1872, to Shambhoochandra Mookherjee: "I won't take up politics, because then I would be sure to rouse the indignation of Anglo-Saxonian against 'Mookerjee'. That's why Bangadarsan has so little of politics in it."¹⁶

III. Bankimchandra as the High Priest of Nationalism in India

The two creative forces in the history of Europe in the nineteenth century were Liberalism and Nationalism. The young men of Bengal imbibed these two ideals from their study of western history and literature in the first half of the nineteenth century. We have shown in the earlier chapters how the national feeling was expressed in the college debating societies and in newspapers and journals. Then in the sixties of the last century the word 'National' captivated the imagination of young Bengal. The National Mela (1866) was started, the National Paper (1866) was circulated, and the desire for independence was freely expressed. In the next decade the connotation of the political concept 'Nationalism' was discussed in Bengali newspapers.¹⁷

But Bankimchandra knew that Nationalism was an exotic plant transplanted to the Indian soil from Europe. Neither the vague desire of a few educated men nor the philosophical discussions by the learned people would make it grow and flourish in India. He made a careful analysis of the constituent elements of Nationalism in his essay on "Why is India dependent?" He found two essential ingredients of Nationalism. The first is the close identification of interest of the individual with a particular community. The realisation of this would make it the duty of an individual to promote the welfare of the community. When everyone is actuated by such a motive, the different members of the community become one in counsel and opinion and they act together. This is, according to him, the first part of Nationalism but this is only a half. The other half is the differentiation of the interest of the particular community from other communities. The welfare of one nation might mean harm to another. In the clash of interests between nations, a nation should be prepared to promote its own interests even by doing harm to other nations. Such a spirit might be good or bad, but it has been proved that the nation, which is inspired by it, acquires supremacy over other nations. Bankim pointed out the unification of modern Italy and Germany to show the effectiveness of the spirit of nationalism.

Bankimchandra then shows that neither of the two elements of Nationalism has ever been present in India. When the Aryans first came to India they had solidarity amongst them indeed, but in course of time as their number increased, they spread themselves in different parts of the vast sub-continent of India and became divided into various states and communities. Difference of territories, of language, of states, and of religion obliterated the sense of unity. There is no unity among the different communities—the Bengalis, Punjabis, Mahrattas, Rajputs, Jats, Hindus and the Mohammedans. Bankim deplors that such is the misfortune of India, that even where the people belong to the same religion, same language, same race, same country, there is no sense of national unity. As illustrations he pointed out the want of unity amongst the Bengali and the Sikhs. He assigns a special cause to this state of affairs. According to him, if the different communities live for a long time under one empire, they forget their peculiar distinctiveness. As the waters of different rivers falling into the sea cannot be distinguished from one another, similarly the different nationalities living within an empire lose their distinctive features. They lose their distinctiveness, but do not acquire unity. Such was the case with the nationalities within the Roman empire, and such has happened with the Hindus at present.¹⁸

Moreover, the masses in Indian have never identified their interests with those of the Government. Political power, according to Bankim, had ever been the monopoly of a particular class—the Kshatriyas.¹⁹ The subjects in India had never identified their interests with those of the ruling class, and they had never been actuated by a strong desire for maintaining independence. They wanted good government and not independence. Their attitude has been one of indifference towards the governmental power. Whoever might come to power would not give up the land revenue. Then what is the good of fighting for the national king? The ideas of independence and nationalism are new to India and have been taught by the English.²⁰

The other element of Nationalism—the aggressiveness and hatred towards other nations had also been absent in India.

This was due to the attitude of the Indians towards God. A Christian considers God to be apart from the world. He is the ruler of the world indeed, but as the Czar of Russia has a distinctive identity from the whole of Russia, so is God to the Christians. The Hindu conception of God is different from it. God, according to the Hindus, is in everything—he is the “Antaratma” of everything. So devotion to God cannot exist apart from the love of man. To an enlightened Hindu there is no enemy. This high conception peculiar to the Hindus permeated all the strata of the Hindu society. So the Hindu subjects did not consider the people of different nationalities as enemies. Hence, they did not object to subjugation either by the Mohammedans or by the English; rather the Hindus welcomed the English, and handed over the Hindu kingdom to them.²¹

Thus did Bankimchandra prove how alien the feeling of nationalism is to the Hindu mind. It is curious to observe, in this connection, that two of the greatest nations of Asia, India and China, had never realised in the past the importance of nationalism. Liang Chi-Chao in his ‘History of Chinese Political Thought’ interprets the spirit of the Chinese in exactly the same way as Bankim interpreted the thought of ancient India. “Since civilization began”, observes Liang Chi-Chao, “the Chinese people have never considered national government as the highest form of social organisation. Their political thinking has always been in terms of all mankind, with world peace as the final goal, and family and nation as transitional stages in the perfecting of the world order.”²²

The chief task of Bankimchandra was to raise nationalism to the dignity of a religion. He was perfectly aware of the fact that nothing can move the heart of Indians so much as religion. So he preached patriotism as the highest religion. The innate feeling of indifference towards nationalism could be overcome only by placing new religious ideals before the people of India. In that masterpiece of poetic philosophy, the *Kamalakanter Daptar*, Bankimchandra identified the goddess Durga with Bangabhumi.²³ In an old Sanskrit verse mother and motherland have been declared to be superior to heaven.

Bankimchandra went a step further. He called the motherland the mother and the goddess.* He exhorted the six crores of Bengali people to plunge boldly into the dark stream of time and to raise the golden image of the Motherland who had drowned herself centuries ago. In the next chapter entitled, "A song" Bankimchandra bewails the loss of independence in such a pathetic strain that even the most hard-hearted man in moved to tears. These words stirred up the imagination of Young Bengal and converted them into staunch nationalists more effectively than thousands of platform speeches and newspaper articles could have done.²⁴

The concrete image of the motherland was vividly drawn by Bankimchandra in his immortal song, "Bande Mataram." This song was composed several years earlier than 'Anandamath' in which it is incorporated.²⁵ It failed to create any sensation at the time of its publication, but Bankimchandra remarked with a clear prophetic vision that the value of the song would be appreciated quarter of a century later.²⁶ As Bankimchandra's conception of the motherland forms the core of his political philosophy, we quote below Sri Aurobindo's translation of that unique song.

"I bow to thee, Mother,
richly-watered, richly-fruited,
cool with the winds of the south,
dark with the crops of the harvests,
the Mother!
Her strands rejoicing in the glory of the moonlight,
her land clothed beautifully with her trees in flowering bloom,
sweet of laughter, sweet of speech,
the Mother, giver of boons, giver of bliss!
Terrible with the clamorous shout of seventy million throats,
and the sharpness of swords raised in twice seventy million hands,

* Sri Aurobindo in his essay on Rishi Bankimchandra observes: "The third and supreme service of Bankim to his nation was that he gave us the vision of our Mother..... It is not till the motherland reveals herself to the eye of the mind as something more than a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, it is not till she takes shape as a great Divine and Maternal Power in a form of beauty that can dominate the mind and seize the heart that these petty fears and hopes vanish in the all-absorbing passion of our mother and her service, and the patriotism that works miracles and saves doomed nations is born."

Who sayeth to thee, Mother, that thou art weak?
 Holder of multitudinous strength,
 I bow to her who saves,
 to her who drives from her the armies of her foemen,
 the Mother!
 Thou art knowledge, thou art conduct,
 thou our heart, thou our soul,
 for thou art the life in our body,
 in the arm thou art might, O Mother.
 in the heart, O Mother, thou art love and faith.
 It is they image we raise in every temple.
 For thou art, Durga holding her ten weapons of war,
 Kamala at play in the lotuses
 and Speech, the goddess, giver of all lore.
 To thee I bow!
 I bow to thee, goddess of wealth, pure and peerless,
 richly-watered, richly-fruited, the Mother!
 I bow to thee Mother
 dark-hued, candid
 sweetly smiling, jewelled and adorned,
 the holder of wealth, the lady of plenty
 the Mother!"

Several important points are to be noted regarding this most notable song. First, Bankimchandra not only stirs up the imagination of his countrymen by the vision of the peerless beauty of the motherland, but also puts vigour in their heart by pointing out her immense strength. It will be seen in the next section how Bankimchandra considers force as the basis of Government and the highest court of appeal in political matters. Secondly, the strength of the mother is derived, not from any particular section of the people, but from the whole body of the population of the country. He draws the picture of a national militia defending the country. The necessary corollary from this is that Bakimchandra advocated the vesting of political power in the hands of the masses of the people. From his essays on Equality and the Peasants of Bengal, too, it appears that he was an advocate of democracy. Thirdly, Bankimchandra identifies the individual with the country. The country is described as the life in the body of the inhabitants. The various faculties of men—knowledge, conduct, love and faith—are described as springing from the motherland. If a man be the product of his environment, there is no fallacy in the above description. Such an identification between the individual and the community is particularly

necessary for India, because India had suffered grievously in the past owing to the lack of such a spirit of identity. Fourthly, he raised patriotism to the dignity of the highest of religions by identifying the motherland with Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. It is to be remembered in this connection that Bankimchandra was not in favour of image-worship.²⁷ Like Raja Rammohun he held that image-worship is suited to the least advanced of devotees only.²⁸ As image-worship could not be rooted out of the country all at once, he gave a new orientation to it by interpreting the goddesses as the motherland. So he sang: "It is thy image we raise in every temple." Bankimchandra not only promoted the spirit of nationalism by this song, but also placed an ideal, to be realised by the national government. That ideal is plenty for all.

Bankimchandra further developed the idea of nationalism as a religion in his famous novel *Ananda Math*, which has become the Bible of modern Bengali patriotism. Bhavananda, a leader of the Sannyasis, explained to Mahendra, a new recruit, that the new order of monks do not recognise any mother but the mother country. Bankim gives an original interpretation of the image of Goddess Kali. According to him Kali is the symbol of degradation of India. She is black in colour because of the intense misery of the country. She is naked, because India had been denuded of all her wealth. She wears the garland of human skulls because the whole country has become a vast burial ground. She has Siva under her feet to show that the Indians are trampling down their own welfare. He explains the image of Durga as the realisation of the future greatness of India. The mother country would reveal herself as Durga when all the children of the mother country would call her mother. That is to say, the recognition of nationalism as the religion of India is the only way of attaining the status of a national state.

The influence of the "Bande Mataram" song and *Ananda Math* on the history of modern India has been no less than Rousseau's "Social Contract" on the history of France in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Though Bankimchandra explained nationalism in terms of Bengal only, yet his ideal transcended the petty boundary of provincialism and spread

itself throughout India. The paper started by Sri Aurobindo during the Swadeshi agitation was entitled "Bande Mataram." The secret appeals that were issued by the revolutionaries in Bengal began with the phrase: "Om Bande Mataram." Dhingra, who was executed in London in 1909 for murdering Sir Curzon Wylie, died with the words *Bande Mataram* on his lips. Before his death he said that as a Hindu he felt that a wrong done to his homeland was a sacrilege against the godhead; and that the service to homeland was the service to Sri Krishna. Bipinchandra Pal took over bodily the whole doctrine of nationalism from Bankimchandra and declared in 1909 that the mother country was a synthesis of all the gods that had been worshipped and still were worshipped by the Hindus.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the influence of Bankim's romantic ideal of nationalism only produced revolutionary activity. Constructive statesmen like Gopal Krishna Gokhale were also affected by such an ideal. The programme of the Servants of India Society was written in the spirit of Bankim's ideal. The programme declared, "One essential condition of success in this work is that a sufficient number of our countrymen must now come forward to devote themselves to the cause in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken. Public life must be spiritualised. Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side."

Nationalism has been generally promoted in the European countries by romantic idealism in literature. Bankimchandra, however, thought it desirable to base the principle of nationalism on a philosophical principle. His "*Dharmatattva*," which began to appear in the *Navajivan* from 1884, is the outcome of this desire. The '*Dharmatattva*' seems to have been inspired mainly by Comte's Religion of Humanity, but Bankimchandra introduced some important modifications in Comte's theory. Like Comte, Bankim too defined Religion as the full harmony of life in all its elements. These elements are, according to both the philosophers, Affection, Intellect and Activity. The Religion of Humanity as well as Bankim's Dharma strengthen each subordinate element of our nature:—Morally, it restrains without lowering the instincts; indeed,

it ennobles them: intellectually, it expands the power of speculation, especially in the sphere of art: and practically, it disciplines the activity, referring every action to a common end.* Both Comte and Bankim held that the systematic unity or harmony of mind demands the predominance of feelings over thought. But while Comte's religion of positivism, "which has love for its principle, order for its basis, and progress for its end,"²⁹ is a religion without God, Bankim's Dharma centres round God. With the help of Sandilya's *Bhaktisutra* he explains how all the faculties are to be so directed as to produce devotion to God. But at the same time Bankim maintains that there can be no devotion to God without love for Humanity. For the sake of self-realisation love of Humanity, which is but another name for devotion to God, is to be cultivated.

Bankim's theory of patriotism is based on the love of humanity. God is in every animate being, therefore, the whole living world should be the object of as much love as the individual self. The protection of society is more important than the protection of self, because there can be no welfare for an individual outside the society. The individual and the family are but parts of the society; so the part may be sacrificed for the sake of the whole. Bankimchandra identifies society with the country, or nation. Each nation ought to protect itself, otherwise a greedy and sinful nation might

*Compare Comte's *System of Positive Polity*, Vol. II, pp. 58, 65 (Harrison's edition : Longmans, Green, 1875), with the following chapters of Bankim's *Dharmatattva* : V, VI (showing how Dharma ennobles lower instinct); X, XV, XXI, XXVII (showing how activity is to be disciplined by reference to devotion to God and affection for self, family, country, humanity, and lower animals). Bankim's classification of faculties is slightly different from Comte's. Bankim divides faculties into two—physical and mental. And then the mental faculties are subdivided into three—Intellectual, Emotional and Aesthetic. Bankim has thus defined his idea :—

"All-round development of mental faculties implies expert knowledge, sound discrimination promptness in activity, piety at heart and appreciation for humour. Over and above these there must be all-round development of physical faculties, that is, the body must be strong, healthy and dextrous in all sorts of physical activity."

conquer others. In that case religion and progress would vanish from the world. So it is for the good of humanity that patriotism should be cultivated as a duty. Bankimchandra does not find any contradiction between nationalism and internationalism. Love of humanity or internationalism does not imply that one should allow his country to be ravaged by others. It means equal regard for all. So one should not do harm to others but at the same time should not allow others to injure his self, family and country. If patriotism is cultivated in the spirit of disinterestedness and as an integral part of the duty of man, there will be no conflict between nationalism and internationalism.

In the last chapter of *Dharmatattva* Bankim concluded that ideally the love of all animate beings is the best Dharma. But in consideration of the imperfect state of human civilisation, patriotism should be considered as the highest religion.* It is to be noted in this connection that though Comte assigned a high place to patriotism as the typical form of social feeling,³⁰ yet the patriotism he advocated was narrow in scope, inasmuch as the state, according to him is coterminous with the city.³¹ Bankim, on the other hand, thought of the state always in terms of sixty or seventy million inhabitants. The basic idea of his Dharma is to widen the circle of love and affection. He thought that the whole world is too wide a field to be conceived in terms of love by an individual. So he was contented with the love of the country as the highest ideal. Bosanquet too considers the national state as "the widest organization which has the common experience necessary to found a common life."³² The sum and substance of Bankim's teaching on nationalism then is that it is necessary for self-realisation of the individual and therefore it is the highest spiritual ideal.

* *Dharmatattva*, Ch. XXVIII :

God exists in all the creatures; this is why love for all creatures is a part and a necessary part of devotion. There can be no devotion to God, no piety and no humanism without love for all the creatures. Love for the self, for the relatives, for the country and for animals and kindness are ingredients of this love. Of these, taking into consideration the condition of man, patriotism should be regarded as the highest religion.

In giving nationalism the dignity of religion Bankimchandra was but following the trend of European thought in the nineteenth century. In Europe religion ceased to be the unquestioned basis and source of public law; in its place came nationalism. The "deadly sin in society now becomes anti-nationalism, lack of patriotism; denial of the authority of the nation over men's consciences becomes the great scandal which shakes society at its very base and shuts out the sceptic from human society, as something sinister and incomprehensible."³³

Being deeply imbued with the pacific ideal of Hinduism, Bankimchandra felt an instinctive horror for aggressive nationalism. He accused European patriotism of being inherently aggressive in character.³⁴ He admits, indeed, that the principle of love for the whole world is contained in the theory of the 'greatest good of the greatest number' of the Utilitarians, in the Religion of Humanity of Comte and above all, in the Religion of love of Jesus Christ. But these lofty ideals could not find acceptance in the heart of the Europeans because of the dominance of the Graeco-Roman culture and Jewish religion in the western world. The Greeks and the Romans could never rise above the conception of patriotism³⁵; and the Jews too were remarkable for their parochial outlook on life. The combined influence of the Graeco-Roman and Jewish inheritance is greater than that of Christianity in modern Europe. So the Europeans have not been able to reconcile nationalism with internationalism.³⁶ It must be admitted that here, as on many other occasions, Bankimchandra unjustly accuses European culture. Four years before Bankim had begun his *Dharmatattva*, T. H. Green, the great Idealist Philosopher, in his lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation, reconciled nationalism with internationalism by explaining the true characteristics of an ideally perfect state.

Bankimchandra was deeply interested in the history of the Renaissance in Europe.³⁷ The root of nationalism in the west lies in the Renaissance movement. Bankim must have learnt from the history of the Renaissance that Nationalism flourished in Europe because national languages were fostered, the Holy Scriptures were translated into them, literature and

art were encouraged, and because those brilliant eras of the past were recalled in which national qualities and characteristics had found expression. He consciously strove to bring about Renaissance in India with a view to promoting nationalism.

Bankimchandra, first of all, tried to impart literary grace to the Bengali language. The comprehensive genius of Raja Rammohun Roy had grasped the importance of the national language in creating the national sentiment more than half a century before Bankimchandra. The Raja was one of the first Bengali writers to employ Bengali prose as the vehicle of higher thought. But his prose style could not attain that sweetness which had been achieved in poetry by the Vaishnava poets, and by Kavikankan and Bharatchandra. After the death of the Raja the flood-tide of the English language and literature almost swept away the infant prose literature of Bengal. Akshaykumar Datta and Maharshi Debendranath Tagore made emphatic protests against the indifference of the educated classes towards the vernacular language. Though men like Dwarakanath Vidyabhushan and Rajendralal Mitra conducted monthly and weekly journals in the vernacular, yet the majority of the people, educated in the western fashion, continued to think the Bengali language to be unfit for conveying serious thought. It required the genius of a great literary artist like Bankim to evince the richness and sweetness of the Bengali language.

On the 31st March, 1870, Bankimchandra read a paper entitled, "A Popular Literature for Bengali" in the Bengal

"We Bengalis are strangely apt to forget that it is only through Bengali that the people can be moved. We preach in English and harangue in English and write in English, perfectly forgetful that the great masses, whom it is absolutely necessary to move in order to carry out any great project of social reform, remain stone-deaf to all our eloquence. To me it seems that a single great idea, communicated to the people of Bengal in their own language, circulated among them in the language that alone touches their hearts, vivifying and permeating the conceptions of all ranks, will work out grander results than all that our English speeches and preachings will ever be able to achieve."—Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association, 1870.

Social Science Association. In that paper he strongly advocated the use of the Bengali language for all purposes.*

The epoch-making journal *Bangadarshan* did more to make the Bengali language popular with the educated classes than anything else. In the very first number of this journal³⁸ Bankimchandra showed the necessity of cultivating the Bengali language as a means of promoting national solidarity. He remarked that the educated class employed the English language exclusively not only for conducting public affairs but also for carrying on conversation and correspondence. He admitted indeed the necessity of using the English language for exchanging thoughts between the different provinces of India. The common platform in which the Bengalis, Marathis, Tailangis and the Punjabis are to meet must be the English language. But as it is impossible to educate all the people in English, the vernaculars must be cultivated with a view to communicating the thoughts and feelings of the educated classes to the masses. A gulf of separation had been created between the educated and the uneducated by the adoption of the English language by the former. Unless and until this gulf is bridged, national progress can never be attained. So long as the thoughts of the educated classes do not find their echo in the heart of the masses, there can be no success in the movement for social uplift. Bankimchandra, therefore, stated that one of the chief objects of the *Bangadarshan* would be to promote harmony and co-operation between the different classes of people.

Bankimchandra was fully aware of the value of history for rousing national consciousness. He wrote several articles in the *Bangadarshan* to show the importance of making diligent researches in the history of the Bengali people.³⁹ By history he did not mean the dry accounts of kings and governors and of their intrigues, amours and wars. In his opinion, these accounts as given by Stuart, Marshman, Lethbridge and the Mohammedan chroniclers, do not form even a part of the history of Bengal. By history he means social, religious, cultural and economic history of the Bengali people. He was the first writer to perceive the importance of the sixteenth century in the history of Bengal and to call it the first age of the Renaissance. He exhorted the educated classes to find

out the real history of Bengal by sifting the materials carefully. A nation cannot acquire greatness if it is oblivious of its past glory. He thought it a patriotic duty to refute the charges of cowardice and lack of physical prowess of the Bengali people in the past. In his thought-provoking articles on *Banglar Kalanka* and *Bangalir Bahubal* he tried his best to dispel such notions and to infuse a sense of national superiority in the Bengali people.

Bankimchandra's nationalism was based on a lofty spiritual ideal indeed, but it suffered from one cardinal defect. He was intensely provincial in character. He always thought in terms of Bengal alone, and seldom took into consideration the larger problem of promoting Indian nationalism. India is a subcontinent indeed, and there had always existed a large number of states and nationalities in different parts of the country; but in the modern age it is impossible to maintain a separate national state for each province. In this respect Swami Dayananda may be credited with larger vision than Bankimchandra. But on behalf of Bankimchandra it may be said that the uniformity in social and cultural tradition of the people in a province affords the best material for promoting nationalism. Bankim might have thought of the possibility of establishing a United States of India on the basis of provincial nationalism; but nowhere does he expressly state that ideal. His famous *Bande Mataram* song represents Bengal as the image of the mother country and he sings of the potential capacity of the seventy millions of the Bengali people and not of the three hundred millions of Indians.*

IV. *His Views on Physical Force*

While Bankimchandra's theory of nationalism is a highly idealistic one, his views on the basis of government are characterised by materialistic realism. As a disciple of Comte he held force to be the basis of government.⁴⁰ Along with the

* The writer of the article on Bankimchandra in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* holds that Bankimchandra's *Bande Mataram* song "obtained an evil notoriety in the agitation that followed the Partition of Bengal. That Bankimchandra himself foresaw or desired any such use of it, is impossible to believe."

modern sociologists like Gumpłowicz, Ratzenhofer, Oppenheimer and Edward Zenks, Bankimchandra maintained that the origin of the state is to be traced to physical force and conquest.⁴¹ But Bankim goes a step further than the sociologists. According to him, not only has government originated in force but it is also maintained by force.† T. H. Green, his contemporary English philosopher, came to the conclusion that whatever might be the historical basis of the state, its philosophical basis is will, not force. Bankim, on the other hand, declared force to be allpowerful and the highest court of appeal in this world. He admits indeed the fact that physical force is brute force; but as man in even to-day partially a brute, so physical force is the ultimate support of men. In his *Krishnacharitra* he even went so far as to declare physical force superior to Knowledge, Intellect, Truth and Justice. This assertion, according to him, is especially true in the political field.⁴²

By physical force Bankimchandra did not mean the power of muscles alone. Had powerful physique been the perfect expression of physical force, the Kabulis would have been superior to the Englishmen. When muscular power is coupled with energy, unity, bravery, and perseverance it becomes physical force. Here of course he is thinking of physical force in terms of the nation and not of the individual.

But Bankimchandra was fully conscious of the shortcomings of physical force. He observed that the attainment of physical power does not mean progress. It is only a means to an end. No nation has been able to attain progress simply by physical force. The Tartars who conquered Europe by physical force could not attain much progress in civilisation. But physical power is a necessary condition of progress in the sense that it is a potent means of preservation against those forces which are harmful to progress.⁴³

Then again, Bankimchandra admitted the superiority of public opinion to physical force. The application of physical force is productive of much injury to society while public

† Every ruler maintains his position by virtue of physical force. It is physical prowess which is ruling the world even to-day.

opinion can achieve without bloodshed the same which physical power secures. Much of the progress in civilisation has been due to public opinion. Besides animality man has got some inherent altruistic motives. Public opinion alone rouses these motives to action. He admits that in our country there is no possibility of using physical force and that under the present circumstances it is inadvisable too. So public opinion is the only means of preventing social tyranny.

In many cases public opinion becomes operative because physical force is behind it. Bankimchandra cites two historical examples in support of this. Charles I of England was overpowered by the physical power of the English people, so his son James II fled away from the country without measuring his strength with the people when he saw the public opinion solidly massed against him. Again, the British Government in India had crushed the popular rising of 1857, but as it is not palatable to measure strength with the subjects, the India Government has learnt to abandon its desired course in the face of grave popular discontent.⁴⁴

As Bankimchandra held physical force to be so very important in political affairs, he formulated a theory of physical training both for men and for women. In his *Dharmatattva* he emphasised the necessity of physical culture.⁴⁵ The cultivation of intellect and emotion and the pursuit of knowledge is dependent on a good physique. Mental faculties can never be fully developed unless the physical faculties are developed. Moreover, he who has not properly cultivated the physical faculties, cannot protect himself. He who cannot protect himself, cannot practise Dharma without hindrance. Self-protection means, in its wider sense, the protection of one's own country, which is the highest of Dharma according to him. So physical culture is necessary for practising and maintaining Dharma. Bankim, therefore, thinks it the incumbent duty of everyone to learn the art of fighting. In the small city states of Greece everyone had to learn fighting. In the big states, however, fighting is considered to be the duty of a particular class. Bankim does not like to depend on such professional army. In ancient India the *Kshatriyas*, and in mediaeval India the *Rajputs* alone had to fight. The result was that as soon as the *Rajputs* were

defeated, India was subjugated by the Mohammedans. Had everyone in India been capable of fighting, such a deplorable incident would not have taken place. He further shows the efficacy of national militia by citing the example of Revolutionary France in 1793. While Bismarck was making Germany the foremost military state in Europe by adopting the system of national militia, Bankimchandra was preparing a philosophical defence for training every citizen in the practice of arms.

In his system of physical culture Bankimchandra included the following:—development of muscular power by taking exercise according to the old Indian system; training in the practice of all kinds of arms; riding, swimming, wrestling and above all the capacity to bear cold and heat, thirst, hunger and fatigue. This power of endurance can be acquired by taking exercise, by proper training, by the strict regulation of diet and by controlling the passions. He has given a graphic illustration of such an all-round training in his novel *Devichaudhurani*.⁴⁶ He does not mention whether *Devichaudhurani* also practised riding. But Shanti, a heroine of *Anandamath* is depicted as a very good rider. From the above two illustrations it is not unreasonable to conclude that Bankim chalked out his programme of physical training not only for men but also for women.

Bankimchandra was not a votary of the cult of non-violence, as interpreted by the Buddhists and the Jainas. He showed that without doing violence to others, it is impossible for us to live. If one does not kill the serpent or the tiger which is going to attack him, he will be killed by it. Similarly, invaders like Alexander, Sultan Mahmud, Attila, Changhiz, Taimur, Nadir Shah, Frederick II and Napoleon deserve to be killed. But violence should be resorted to only in preventing violence. Hence, he does not subscribe entirely to the doctrine that nonviolence is the highest virtue.⁴⁷ He maintains that at times it becomes the incumbent duty of everyone to fight. As for example, in defence of one's own country he should take up arms. If he does not, he incurs the sin of non-fulfilment of duty.⁴⁸

Bankimchandra was influenced to a certain extent by the writers of the Anthro-po-geographical school like Buckle.

Buckle maintained that the physical weakness of the Indians is due to the influence of climate, soil and food. But Bankim held that these adverse influences are not permanent in character. They might be obviated by the change of diet and social customs. He refused to believe that the fertility of the soil is a cause of physical weakness. Many parts of Europe and America are not less fertile than Bengal and yet the people of those parts are not weak. He is also sceptical about the adverse influence of climate.⁴⁹ Like Comte he believed that civilisation diminishes the effects of climate.⁵⁰ He contended that there is no natural bar against the attainment of physical power by the Bengali people. The only thing necessary for it is the iron determination of everyone of the Bengalis to acquire it.

The force of a nation, however, does not depend on the physical prowess of the higher classes, but on the power of the masses. So Bankim took up the problem of improving the condition of the peasants in all earnestness.

V. His Views on Society and Government

Bankimchandra anticipated many of the conclusions of the modern sociologists in his opinion on society and government. He was probably led by Herbert Spencer into the confusion between state and government and therefore made no mention of the state apart from government. Like the modern sociologists he held that society is the more general and basic fact and entity, which embraces in an inclusive manner all forms of corporate activity. Government is but a specific agency of society and it is utilised by society to ensure the safety, efficiency and progress of the collective mode of life. But he failed to discover that social life is anterior to human life. He did not make any inquiry as to the origin of society, because Herbert Spencer has demonstrated that society has never been made or manufactured but has grown in process of time; but in many places he hinted at the existence of the human life before the formation of society. Bankim chandra's views on society and government have been greatly influenced

* In his *Vahudal o Vakyabal*, he observes that Mill's *Liberty* is to many a book of revelation.

by Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill. He regarded Mill's "Liberty" with the highest respect and borrowed many of the arguments in the essays and *Dharmatattva*.*

According to Bankim, society is necessary for the performance of Dharma. So long as human beings have not been united in society, they cannot satisfy anything but the bare physical necessities. No progress is possible in knowledge outside the society. Without the enlargement of the bounds of knowledge right cannot be distinguished from wrong. Where there is no corporate existence, there is no love between man and man, and therefore, no devotion to God. So the fulfilment of Dharma can be expected only in social life.⁵¹

But social life brings in its train some evils too. One of these is poverty. In the pre-social stage no one is poor. Everyone is equally entitled to fruits and roots of the forest, to the eatable animals, to the water of the river and to the shelter of the tree. Nobody desires more than what is necessary for the bare maintenance of life; so no one cares to accumulate those things which are found in abundance. So none is richer than his fellows and none is consequently poorer. Poverty is a relative term; and the relative affluence of a particular class over others is a product—and a lasting product—of social life. Thus we see that Bankimchandra admitted with Hobbes that life is brutish before the origin of society; but he refused to believe that life in the pre-social stage was full of strife. He had studied the works of Rousseau carefully. Here he seems to have been carried away by the rosy colour of pre-social life as depicted by Rousseau; and he seems to have forgotten that the instinct of acquisition is a primitive instinct.

Another evil of social life, in the opinion of Bankimchandra, is the considerable loss of liberty. A man living in society is subject to the control in some respects of all the individuals belonging to that society. So he cannot do whatever he likes. This is beneficial to social life indeed, but it implies restrictions on the individuals.⁵²

In spite of those inherent evils of social life, Bankimchandra inculcated the principle of due subordination of the individual to society. Society is our teacher, law-giver and protector.

Society is the real government. So everyone should try to be useful to society.⁵³ From his study of the past history of India, and especially of Bengal, he comes to the conclusion that Bengal has always been governed and protected by society and not by government—that is, in the language of Prof. Dewey, by “folkways” and not by “stateways.”⁵⁴

It has been already observed that Bankimchandra regarded Government only as an agency of society. But that agency is the most important of all the agencies of society. Man is the source of power. Society as the corporate body of men is also the source of power. One of the chief forces of society is centralised in government. With Herbert Spencer he believed that government, like the nervecentre, regulates the whole body of social organism.⁵⁵ Government is necessary for the protection of society. Bankimchandra thinks that as it is impossible to carry on administration if everybody becomes governor, so the governmental authority has been vested in one or more persons. He has generally used the term Raja for government as it is the familiar concept for government in India. But the statement just referred to shows that his mental vision was not limited to monarchy alone as the form of government.

He thinks that the organisation of society is like that of the family. As the father is the head of the family, so the king is the head of the society. The king protects and preserves the social organisation like the father. He is, therefore, entitled to as much respect as the father does command in the family. But Bankim makes a distinction between loyalty and respect to the person of the king. In a republic the particular members are not entitled to respect but the Congress in the U.S.A. and Parliament in Great Britain deserve respect and devotion. Unless the sovereign authority is respected and willingly obeyed by the people, society becomes weak; because government derives its strength from the support of the people.⁵⁶

Out of this distinction between loyalty as an abstract principle and reverence to the person of the king, comes the theory of resistance to the sovereign. A king remains a king only so long as he protects the subjects. He ceases to be a king as soon as he becomes an oppressor of the people. Then he

is no longer entitled to devotion; rather it becomes the duty of citizens to force him to govern well. Despotism of the king is injurious to the interests of society.⁵⁷ In his *Anandamath* he further elucidates this principle. Bhavananda justifies the loot of the revenue by observing that he who does not protect the kingdom is no king at all. The relation between the king and subjects is that of protection and obedience. If the king does not protect, he is not entitled to obedience.⁵⁸ Bankim does not care to inquire into the more intricate problem as to who is to decide whether the king is protecting the subjects or not.

As a disciple of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer Bankimchandra evinced a strong predilection for individual liberty. He admits indeed the right of the sovereign to force one to act against his own inclination; because the sovereign has been established as the final judge of right and wrong and his judgment has been accepted as infallible and therefore he is entitled to curb our passions. But like Mill, Bankim holds that the sovereign ought to curb only those passions, the manifestation of which might be injurious to others. That action which is injurious to the individual self alone ought not to be restrained by government.⁵⁹

Barker has called Mill "the prophet of an empty liberty and an abstract individual." Like Mill, Bankim too may be said to have "no clear idea of the social whole in whose realisation the false antithesis of 'state' and 'individual' disappears." Bankimchandra, however, recognized the necessity of social coercion in some special exigencies.⁶⁰

VI. Theory of Equality

Bankimchandra was averse to the contemporary political propaganda, because its basic principle was begging. The sole aim of all his writings was to rouse the self-consciousness of the people of Bengal and to uplift their personality. The greatest obstacle to the national regeneration is presented by the lack of unity and solidarity amongst the people of Bengal.

* In republishing these essays in the form of a book Bankim admitted that there were some mistakes in them. The views he

He made a heroic effort to remove this evil by preaching the theory of equality. His essays on *Samya* or Equality were published in the *Bangadarshan* between 1873 and 1875 A.D.* In the preface to these essays he says that he has not discussed the problem in the same way as the Europeans did. In discussing the theory of Equality, the European writers on political philosophy generally confined themselves to the problems of civil equality and political equality. Writers of the Socialistic school tackled the problem mainly from the economic point of view. Bankimchandra thought that the solution of the problem of social equality is more urgent than that of any other form of equality. Civil equality ensuring an equal right of all to be protected in respect of person and estate and family relations and to appeal to the courts of law for such protection, has indeed been granted by the British Government in India, but owing to the prevalence of social inequality, this right has not come within the reach of that class which is most in need of it. Political equality would remain an idle dream so long as the people would continue to live divided in water-tight compartments. So Bankimchandra believed social equality to be the very basis of civil and political equality. He deals also with the problem of economic equality, not as an end in itself, but as a means of securing social equality. He is convinced that social equality is impossible apart from the fulfilment of material conditions. The minimum requirement for moral life is that the livelihood of a man and his family be safeguarded. Hence he takes up his pen for writing "*Samya*" and the "*Peasants of Bengal*."

Bankimchandra finds the world full of inequalities. There are social inequality, racial inequality, economic inequality and natural inequality. Of these the economic inequality is the most severe. He discards the idea of natural equality of men. Nature has designed men to be unequal. Some are born strong and some weak. Some are born with better brain than others and are consequently more intelligent than the rest. Some are born beautiful and some are ugly. These are

expressed on the intriguing designs of the ancient Brahmans underwent complete change when he wrote the tenth chapter of the *Dharmatattva*.

instances of natural inequality. But there are many instances of unnatural inequalities. The inequality of status between a Brahman and a Sudra, between an Englishman and an Indian are examples of unnatural inequality.

Prevalence of unnatural inequality is one of the greatest causes of the degradation of a community. India has suffered so long from so many evils mainly because of the wide prevalence of social inequality. In progressive societies unnatural inequality, and specially social inequality, is weeded out by two means: either by the spirit of compromise and influence of precepts, or by revolution. In ancient Rome the social inequality between the Plebeians and Patricians was put an end to by the wonderful spirit of compromise shown by the statesmen of Rome. In France and in the United States of America recourse had to be taken to Revolution and civil war to destroy the demon of inequality.

But the precepts of great teachers have done more to spread the ideals of equality than revolution and warfare. Bankimchandra cites the examples of the wonderful influence of Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ and Rousseau. Gautama Buddha was able to raise the position of the Sudras to equality with the Brahmans. The result of this new social solidarity was seen in the astonishing political, cultural and economic progress of India during a millennium. The precepts of Jesus effected the emancipation of slaves and raised the dignity of the humblest of men. The progress of the modern Europeans may be attributed, amongst many other causes, to the preaching of the ideal of equality of men by Jesus Christ.

In the second chapter of his essay on Samya, Bankimchandra discusses the theory of equality as presented by Rousseau. He criticises Rousseau's theory of economic equality by quoting the opinion of Voltaire, who is said to have characterised it as the philosophy of Satan. Bankimchandra is of opinion that the whole of the French Revolution was but a commentary of Rousseau's work. The French Revolution changed the character of the European civilisation. Bankim maintains that such a stupendous change was possible only because Rousseau preached the philosophy of social equality, which contained, however, only a half-truth.

He attributes the fatherhood of modern socialistic and communistic movements to Rousseau, whose theory of communal ownership of land profoundly influenced Proudhon, Louis Blanc and Cabbe.* He mentions the salient features of the views of these writers, but refrains from making any criticism of these. He mentions also the name of the 'International' but does not refer to Karl Marx, the father of modern Communism. Karl Marx's 'Capital' had not been translated into English when Bankimchandra wrote his 'Samya'. So, apparently he did not know much about Marxian principles.

He then explains John Stuart Mill's views on hereditary succession to property and comes to the conclusion that the children should inherit only that much of the property of their father as is absolutely necessary for their training and livelihood; the rest should come under social control. He holds that equitable law regarding succession has not been made anywhere in the world. He predicts that though the socialistic theories are being ridiculed by fools to-day, yet a day would come when these will find general acceptance all over the world. He concludes the second chapter by exhorting the Zamindars to treat their Ryots in the spirit of a brother and of an equal to himself. In fair justice, it must be admitted that the Ryots are the owners of the estate, the proceeds of which are being enjoyed by the Zamindars alone.

* This is not the first time that the socialistic theories were being discussed by the Indian public. The advanced students of the Calcutta University were expected to be familiar with these theories. In the M. A. Examination in History in 1870 the following question was set : "What is the aim of communism ? Describe the scheme propounded by Fourier and St. Simon respectively." (Calcutta University Calendar, 1870-71.) In the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* of 1873 (Saka 1795) a criticism of Sherpur Vivaran by Harachandra Chaudhury was published. In course of this criticism an account of a sect founded by Tipu Pagla of Letiakanda in Susang Pargana has been given. Tipu Pagla preached the equality of men and exhorted his followers not to obey the rich nor to pay rent to the Zamindars. In 1824 the followers of Tipu rose in rebellion, which was ultimately suppressed by the intervention of the Government. The critic remarks that Tipu Pagla might be called the Louis Blanc of Eastern Bengal.

The concluding part of the second chapter of 'Samya' leaves no doubt in one's mind that Bankimchandra was at heart a convert to the doctrine of the socialists. His *Anandamath* and *Devichaudhurani*, in which the heroes and heroines loot the property of the idle and oppressive rich represent also a crude type of socialistic anarchism. The circumstances under which Bankimchandra was placed prevented him from giving fuller and clearer expression to his socialistic views†

The third and fourth chapters of 'Samya' are mainly reprints from a part of his essays on the peasants of Bengal. We shall take up the third chapter in our discussion of his views on Economics. The fourth chapter aims at explaining the causes of inequality between the different social classes in India. The whole of this chapter is an adaptation from Buckle's introductory chapters in the "History of Civilisation in England." Henry Thomas Buckle (1821-1862) believes that climate, soil and food influence mankind first of all because they make for the accumulation of wealth, and the accumulation of wealth must precede any high development of knowledge. There must be an intellectual class with ample leisure to devote themselves to the pursuit of knowledge. It is the surplus resulting from an excess of production over consumption that makes existence possible for the intellectual class, who do not create the wealth upon which they live.⁶¹ Not only does accumulation of wealth depend on physical causes, but the distribution of wealth also is influenced by them. As soon as the accumulation of wealth has fairly begun, a division into the employers and the employed appears among the population. The price paid for labour depends like that of other things offered in the market upon the action of the law of supply and demand; if the supply of labourers is

† He was all along conscious of the restrictions imposed on his freedom of opinion by the conditions of service under the Government. He wanted to write a novel depicting the character of the Rani of Jhansi but he gave up that idea for fear of incurring the displeasure of the Government. He told Srishchandra Majumdar—

"I wish I could draw the character of Lakshmibai but the Europeans have already become cross with me on account of my writing the *Anandamath* ; there would be no end of trouble if I write on her."

more plentiful than the demand for them wages are bound to be low. Where food is found in abundance and people can subsist on small quantities, the increase in population will be greater than where food is scarce and difficult to secure, and where a great amount is needed to preserve life. It is obvious that in warm and fertile countries food is more abundant than in cold and barren countries. It is, therefore, apparent that there is a greater tendency towards an increase in population in warm countries than in cold. Buckle, therefore, concludes that "there is a strong and constant tendency in hot countries for wages to be low and in cold countries for them to be high."⁶² Then he applies this broad principle to the interpretation of the history of civilisation in Ireland, India, Egypt, Central America and Peru. Regarding India he says that as rice is the chief food in this country, the population grew rapidly, the caste system appeared and the labouring classes were held in contempt.⁶³

Bankimchandra applies these principles, with amplifications, to the elucidation of the history of civilisation in India. He also takes the help of the economic principle of Mill to show how the wages of labourers tended to decrease steadily and gradually. According to Mill, "wages depend on the proportion between population and capital. Wages cannot rise but by an increase of the aggregate funds employed in hiring labourers, or a diminution in the number of competitors for hire."* Bankim believes that the increase in population is a natural phenomenon.** This increase can be checked either by emigration or by restricting marriage. Bankim holds that emigration had never been largely resorted to in ancient India, because the heat of the country has destroyed the energy necessary for it. Java and Bali are the only two instances of ancient Indian colonization and for a large and ancient country like India these were certainly not sufficient. As food is easily available here, the people have never

* The wages fund theory of Mill has been discarded by the modern economist.

** The net increase in population is not a natural phenomenon, because where the birth-rate is high the death-rate is also high. Moreover, diseases, natural calamities and war diminish the population.

voluntarily put a restriction on marriage. So the population began to multiply in abundance, labour became extremely cheap, and the labouring class began to sink rapidly into the most degraded condition. The low wages deprived the labourers of leisure and for want of leisure they could not cultivate learning. The intellectual classes became more and more despotic and oppressive as the labouring classes sank into degradation. Physical causes, therefore, are responsible for the poverty, ignorance and slavishness of the masses in India.

Bankimchandra adduces some new arguments over and above those given by Buckle to explain why the masses remained contented with their wretched condition. He shows how the Hindu as well as the Buddhist teachers and philosophers taught the people to be indifferent to the material things and be contented with their own lot. In medieval Europe the Church preached the same doctrines but the Renaissance freed the Europeans from the thralldom of such false principles. In India, on the other hand, the teachings of the scriptures have accentuated the tendencies which are natural in the physical condition of the country. So social inequality has been perpetuated in India.

Bankimchandra then shows that the degradation of the labouring classes (*i.e.*, the Sudras according to him) adversely affected the Vaisyas, Kshatriyas and the Brahmans also. The Vaisyas lived on trade and commerce but as the masses did not care to produce a large surplus of goods over bare necessities, and consequently had not the means for paying for foreign goods, trade could not flourish to the same extent as was to be expected from a large and fertile country like India. The masses were poor, lazy and devoid of energy and, therefore, they could not exercise that efficient control over the administrators which is essential for securing good government. The Kshatriyas became despotic; they degenerated into voluptuaries. So we find that the strong, dutiful and virtuous kings depicted in the Mahabharata degenerated into the weak, effeminate and sensual kings, portrayed in the medieval Sanskrit drama and poetry. Had the people been prosperous they could have criticised the rulers, who out of fear would have remained efficient. In Rome and England the character of government improved

owing to the opposition of the Plebeians and the Commons respectively; on the other hand the Kshatriyas in India became poor and inefficient owing to the enslavement of the Sudras.* The Brahmans spread the net of scriptural regulations to enslave the other three Varnas, but like the spiders they themselves were ensnared in their own nets. The mental field of the Brahmans became barren like a desert. The Brahmans, who had once produced the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Paninivyakaran, Samkhya, etc., began to take pride in writing Vasavadatta and Kadambari.

Though Bankim does not directly mention, yet it may be inferred from the trend of his essays on Samya, that the accumulated results of the physical and cultural causes of the glaring inequality among the different classes in India began to be manifested in the middle ages, i.e., in the post-Gupta period. The physical causes, however, must have appeared much earlier. The condition of the Sudras, then, must have been miserable in the pre-Bhuddhistic age. But modern researches have shown that the caste system had not been so rigid and inelastic in that period, and the Sudras were not as wretched as Bankim would make us believe. Buckle's generalisation regarding the influence of physical causes on the cultural and economic development of India does not hold good. It is also difficult to accept Bankim's contention that the doctrine of equality preached by Buddha ushered in a millennium of prosperity for India despite the operation of the physical causes. The millennium after Buddha was indeed a glorious age for India, but had the influence of physical causes been paramount how could a simple doctrine of equality obviate the operation of that influence?

The fifth chapter of Samya, dealing with the equality between the two sexes, was published in the "Bangadarshan" in Kartik, 1282 B.S. As the fourth chapter is based mainly on Buckle, so this chapter is based mainly on the 'Subjection of Women' by Mill. Bankim says that the women in all the countries are subject to men, but nowhere in the world has that subjection been carried to such an extent as in India. Like Rammohun, Bankimchandra too pleads for the equal

*The religious merit as well as the wealth of Kshatriyas disappeared on account of the slavery of Sudras."

right of inheritance for women and he repeats the very argument of the Raja to the effect that women are not less intelligent and less reliable in character than men. He takes strong objection to the traditional standard of conduct set down for a wife, which prescribes that a woman should serve her husband, be he ever so wicked and licentious. In his "Bishabriksha" and "Krishnakanter Will" he shows in the character of Suryamukhi and Bhramar that if a husband transfers his affection to any other woman, the wife is justified in cutting off all connection with the husband. Bankim, the disciple of John Stuart Mill, was thus the first to raise the standard of revolt in the cause of women against men in India. In the cross-currents of Indian politics of the present day the question of rights of women is not less important than the communal problems.

In the concluding part of his essays on Samya Bankimchandra takes the view which has been arrived at by the modern psychological school of political philosophy. Anticipating the findings of differential psychology and granting the obvious variations in human ability, Bankimchandra interpreted the term equality to mean equality of opportunity.* Such is the view also of Giddings, Cooley, Hobson, Dewey, Hobhouse, Barnes, Willoughby and A.L. Lowell.

VII. His Views on Education

To Bankimchandra the basic problem of Indian politics was the lack of social solidarity. The whole trend of his series of essays on equality was to show that the different kinds of inequalities prevailing in India from very ancient times have been the cause of so much misery of the people of this country. We have seen that he pleaded for equality of opportunity for all. But he was conscious of the fact that a series of legislative enactments throwing open all the avenues of life to all,

* "The principle of Equality does not imply that all the persons must have the same economic condition. That can never be. Where there is natural difference in intellect, mental faculties, education and physical power, there must prevail some degree of inequality; nobody can prevent that. But there must be equality of rights—which means none with necessary quality should be debarred from having rights. The path of progress should be open to all."

irrespective of caste and creed, would not do much to ameliorate the condition of the masses in India. What remedy, then, did he suggest for bringing about the desire goal of social equality? He relied on education as the sovereign remedy for all the evils from which India has been suffering.

But he is careful to explain that by education he does not mean the three R's, nor a mere acquaintance with the rules of grammar and geometry. He understands by education that which trains the mental faculties, imparts skilfulness to the respective avocations of the different classes, and gives encouragement to the performance of one's duty.⁶⁴ He further elucidates the idea in his *Dharmatattva*, where he says that the true object of education is to develop harmoniously the physical, intellectual, aesthetic and emotional faculties.⁶⁵ This sort of education does not necessarily mean literacy. Bankim points out the example of the illiterate old matrons, many of whom were superior to the educated Babus in point of culture.

In his 'Krishnacharitra' he observes that in ancient India the Brahmans did not neglect to impart such a culture to the women and the masses.⁶⁶ The Mahabharata is the immortal monument to the effort of the ancient Brahmans in the cause of popular education.

He complains that in modern India no one, from Rammohun to the vociferous politicians of his time, has tackled the problem of mass education with right earnestness. There is no bond of sympathy between the educated and the uneducated. The educated people do not care for the well-being of the peasants. They write articles in newspapers and deliver lectures in English not to educate the masses but to get applause from the Englishmen like Fawcett and Sir Ashley Eden. But really the problem of mass education is of such supreme importance that it can no longer be neglected. The census figures revealed that in Bengal (1878) there were sixty-six millions of people. Mere iron serves no useful purpose, but if it is made into a weapon it can break stone. Similarly, says Bankim, these uneducated people are living useless lives; but if they are educated there is nothing in this world which cannot be achieved by them.⁶⁷ Education of the peasants and of women would not only solve the political

problem of India, but also save the country from economic exploitation. If the women be educated they can earn their own bread and attain equality with men. All the social evils can be removed by popular education alone. He had no faith in education being filtered down from above. He urged the necessity of undertaking the education of masses directly.

Bankimchandra suggests several means for diffusing culture, not necessarily literacy, amongst the people. In the *Dharmatattva* as well as in his essay on *Lok-shiksha* he suggests the revival of Kathakata or popular exposition of the Epics and the Puranas. Secondly, the educated people should carry the torch of knowledge to the uneducated. They are to explain their ideas in popular lectures and intimate conversation with the uneducated masses in every village. Thirdly, the newspapers should be converted into *real organs* of popular education. Above all, Bankim points out that means of popular education by which Buddha was able to preach his highly ethical and abstruse religion, Sankar was able to triumph over Buddhism, and Chaitanya was able to convert the whole of Orissa to Vaishnavism. Bankimchandra assigns a very high place to the Sannyasi teachers. In every one of his novels, excepting *Indira*, *Bishabriksha* and *Rajsingha* there is a Sannyasi teacher inspiring the heroes and heroines with high ideals.

VIII. Administration of Law and Justice

Bankimchandra published four essays on the peasants of Bengal in the *Bagadarshan* in 1872 A.D., that is forty years after Raja Rammohun Roy had given his written evidence regarding judicial administration in India. Both Rammohun and Bankim had direct first-hand information regarding the administration of law and justice; both had been responsible, though subordinate, officials of the Government in India.*

* Bankimchandra preached nationalism indeed, but he did not want immediate withdrawal of British rule from India. His view was that the British rule should continue here, till the masses, and not the educated classes alone, become conscious of their nationhood. His opinion on British Government might be gleaned from the following quotation:—

But both of them made scathing comments on the administration of justice in British India. Some of the suggestions of Rammohun like the introduction of the jury system, Habeas Corpus, codification of law and the appointment of a large number of Indians to higher judicial posts were, indeed, accepted by the Government and given effect to during the intervening period between Rammohun and Bankimchandra, and yet Bankim had to repeat some of the charges levelled by Rammohun against the British Indian Judicial administration. The strictures which Bankimchandra, the level-headed philosopher, passed against it, have not been surpassed in virulence by any other critic of any other system of administration in the world. He said, "Courts and brothels are of the same type; unless one is ready to pay for it one can have no admittance to either of these."⁶⁸

The burden of Bankimchandra's complaints against the judicial system is that the poor are not protected by law in British India against the oppression of the rich. The courts are open to those only who can afford to pay for the judicial stamp, for pleaders, for entertaining the witnesses, and for the gratification of the peons and clerks of the court.⁶⁹ Even if a man stakes his all for securing justice he cannot be sure that justice will be really administered in his case. Bankim is extremely grieved to see that every day the poor Ryots are being most shamelessly and tyrannically oppressed by the Zamindars. He asks, "How is it that in spite of the existence of good laws and judicial courts the Zamindars, who are legally guilty are not punished?.....What kind of law is that by which the weak alone are punished and which is not applicable to the powerful?"⁷⁰

He points out five cardinal defects which have conspired to defeat the ends of justice. First, the prohibitive expenses of judicial trials. This expensiveness debars the poor peasants

"We do not approve of social revolution. We do not tender them the evil advice to set aside the settlement which they have solemnly declared as Permanent and thereby be known as liars to Indians. We can ask them to do so only when we become evil wishers of the English and hostile to the welfare of society."

from seeking judicial redress for their grievances. The rich Zamindar can harass the poor Ryot by filing a suit against him. The judicial system has become a tool in the hands of the rich to oppress the poor. Secondly, the courts are located at a great distance from the villages. The peasants cannot afford and do not dare to leave their hearth and home in order to file a suit against the Gomasta of the Zamindar. The Gomasta has really become the arbiter in cases between peasants and peasants, but there is no redress where he himself is the oppressor. Thirdly, the dilatoriness of the system makes the peasants unwilling to appeal to law. Like Rammohun, Bankimchandra too attributes this delay to the insufficiency of the number of judges and to the complexity of the legal system.⁷¹ Fourthly, the legal system has departed from equity and rationality. He attributes part of the defect to the lack of education of the Indian jury. Fifthly, the judges are not competent. The incompetence is due to the want of familiarity of the English judges with the condition of the country. Though most of the subordinate judges and a few of the superior judges are Indians, yet the system as a whole is dominated by the English judges. The Indian judges have to listen to the dictates of the English judges and to decide cases in such a way that the decision might not be set aside in appeal by the latter.

It should be noted that though Bankim is virulent in his attack on the judicial system in British India, yet he prefers it to the system which prevailed in the Hindu period. He maintains that in the Hindu period the Sudras had practically no legal redress against the Brahmans. There are many non-Brahman judges in British India who decide cases in the first instance. Could the Sudras constitute themselves into Primary Courts in ancient India? Bankim answers this question by saying that we know so little about ancient India that we cannot answer it definitely.⁷²

IX. His Views on the Merits and Defects of the British Indian Administration.

In his essay on "Independence and Dependence of India," Bankimchandra makes a comparative estimate of the merits

and defects of the British Government in India. He says that ancient India was independent in the sense that the kings were Indians and lived in India. Now the monarch lives in England. The interest of distant dependencies is some-times sacrificed to the interest of the country in which the monarch lives. But on the other hand the despotic and licentious character of the monarch in ancient India often entailed great hardship and misery on the people. Now India is ruled from England by the bureaucratic system, and so the personal character of the monarch does not affect the fortune of the Indian people. Bankimchandra wrote a brilliant satire in 1875 in *Bangadarshan* to show how the bureaucratic system resembles a machine.⁷³ In that satire he exposed the red-tapism of the system and showed how the machine works almost automatically irrespective of the personal merits or defects of the Lieutenant-Governor.

He then shows that the distinction which now exists between an Englishman and an Indian is far less galling than the distinction which existed between the Brahmans and the Sudras. In British India there is one law for the English and the Indians; but in ancient India there were different laws for the Brahmans and the Sudras. An Indian judge cannot decide the case in which an Englishman is involved; but could the Sudras ever decide the case of a Brahman? Dwarkanath Mitra is now a judge of the High Court, where would he have been in the "Rama-Rajya?"

In ancient India the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas enjoyed much power; in British India even the highest classes cannot attain to high position according to their merit. The effect of the deprivation of political power is that we are not learning the art of administration and consequently some of our faculties are not being developed. Rammohun held that the loss of political power has been compensated for by the recognition of the principles of civil liberty in British India. It is significant that Bankim, burning with indignation at the oppression of the Ryots, does not lay stress on civil liberty. According to him, the loss of political power has been compensated for by the introduction of European science

and literature. In conclusion he says that in modern India the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas have been degraded in status while the status of the Sudras has been slightly improved.*

X. Government in relation to Social and Economic Activities

Raja Rammohun Roy invoked the aid of Government in effecting social reform, because he believed it to be the function of government to promote the well being of citizens in all respects. Bankimchandra, the disciple of Mill and Spenser, had very little faith in government as an agency for enriching the personality of citizens. He believed social forces to be much more important than governmental regulations in the reform of society. He did not like to invoke the aid of the legislature to abolish polygamy. He says that the spread of good education alone is sufficient to remove all the social abuses.⁷⁴

A sturdy individualist as he was, he did not like to see the government assuming trading functions. He holds that governmental trading is detrimental to the interests of society.⁷⁵ He does not even like to see any interference with trade by government. He calls the policy of economic Protection a great error. He was so much wedded to the theory of Mill that he gave up his nationalistic principle in the economic sphere. Raja Rammohun Roy, on the other hand, had suggested the policy of taxing foreign articles of luxury.

As John Stuart Mill made a departure from the strict individualistic position to invoke the aid of government for the protection of artisans against the capitalists, so did Bankimchandra give up his theory to draw the attention of the government to the wretched condition of the peasants of Bengal. The general trend of his argument is that despite

* To Bankim happiness of the masses is far more important than independence. To an oppressed person, the oppression by one's own countrymen and that by foreigners appears to be the same. He cannot feel that the oppression by his countrymen is somewhat sweet, and that by aliens as somewhat bitter.

their good intentions the British Indian administrators have made mistakes at every step in land legislation; as these mistakes are responsible for the misery of the peasants, it is up to the Government to give all possible redress to them without actually overthrowing the Permanent Settlement. He shows how all the land legislation from the time of Lord Cornwallis to the time of Lord Dalhousie has been in favour of the landlord and against the Ryots.^{76*} The first and the greatest of all blunders committed by the English was to recognise the farmers of land revenue as the absolute owners of land by the Permanent Settlement. Bankimchandra maintained that the Permanent Settlement ought to have been made with the cultivators, who had been recognised as owners of land from time immemorial. Unlike the Raja, Bankim holds that the Permanent Settlement has been in effect the root of permanent degradation of Bengal. Secondly, like Rammohun, Bankim too points out that the promise which had been given at the time of the Permanent Settlement regarding the making of regulations for the protection of the Ryots was not fulfilled. Bankimchandra further maintains that Act V of 1812 destroyed the last vestiges of the rights of the Ryots by allowing the Zamindars the right to fix any rent they liked. Fourthly, Act XVIII of 1812 gave the right of the Zamindars to eject the permanent tenants from their ancestral property. The first Act on behalf of the Ryots was passed in 1859 during the administration of Lord Canning.

Bankimchandra gives credit to the Government for giving up the direct ownership of land and the right of increasing the land revenue, but he finds fault with its policy of interfering with the distribution of wealth. As a result of the Permanent Settlement, wealth has been concentrated in the hands of the few Zamindars to the detriment of the interest of the vast masses of peasantry. He adds that wealth is like cawdung, which being heaped together produces nothing but a bad odour and proves injurious to health : on the other hand

* It is to be noted that land legislation in Ireland by the British Parliament in the first half of the nineteenth century was of a similar character.

if it is scattered all over the field, it makes the land fertile. Had there been no Permanent Settlement with the Zamindars, the sixty million peasants of Bengal would have been able to develop their prospects and personality. In that case, the political agitation would have taken the form of a deafening noise like the roaring of the sea instead of the mild whisperings of five or six Babus in the British Indian Association.†

† Bangadesher Krishak, Ch. IV, 1279 B. S. Falgun. *Bangadarshan*, 1874.

In republishing his essays on the Peasants of Bengal, Bankim claims that the improvement which has been effected in the status of peasants is due to his writing. But if we compare his essays with Pearychand Mitra's article in the Calcutta Review, Vol. VI, 1846, we find Bankim merely repeating many of the ideas of Pearychand.

CHAPTER X

PIONEERS IN POLITICAL IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS IN WESTERN INDIA

I. Jugannath alias Nana Sunkersett (1803-1865)

The public life of Jugannath Sunkersett commenced within five years of the fall of the Maratha power. He was one of the few Indians, who along with some Europeans sent a petition to Parliament for allowing the people of this country to be appointed as Justices of the Peace and members of the Grand Jury. His efforts were crowned with success in 1823. He had the rare distinction of hearing that a life-size marble statue of his own had been voted by his fellow countrymen in 1864. On March 9 of that year a public meeting was held in the Town Hall of Bombay for this purpose. At this meeting Dadabhai Naoroji said : "Mr. Jugannath commenced his useful public career when most of the present educated men were unborn, several in their cradles and the rest playing in the streets."¹ He further observed that as early as 1829 Sunkersett succeeded in procuring for Indians the privilege of sitting on the Grand Jury—"the first Municipal privilege, the natives obtained".

Jugannath Sunkersett was a loyal co-operator, but at the same time a staunch upholder of those ideas and institutions which promoted the feeling of nationality amongst the people. The Bombay Government wanted to close the Sanskrit *Pathshalas* of Poona in 1849, but Sunkersett wrote on December 15 : "For the sake of nationality which still lingers in the breasts of Hindus, I humbly advocate due continuance of Sanskrit."² He insisted on the strict observance of the principle of equality by the Government. In 1862 a proposal was made to exempt the European convicts in Indian Jails

from being hand-cuffed. Sunkersett stoutly opposed it and held that "All Her Majesty's subjects in India should be treated alike."³ If he demanded equality of status between Indians and Europeans, he advocated equal treatment of all castes and even of outcastes. He was appointed a member of the Board of Education in 1840 and he induced the other members of the Board to pass a resolution admitting the necessity of making special efforts for the spread of education amongst the children of lower castes. He set an example in this direction by setting up a school at Chaupati for the *Kolis* at his own cost.⁴ A contributor to the *Prabhakar* blamed him for utilizing the funds of the Board of Education for the diffusion of education amongst the low caste people.⁵ He was one of the earliest champions of female education in Western India. The distinguished European Missionary, Dr. Wilson wanted to open a school for Indian girls in Bombay, but no one would allow him to utilise one's building for the purpose. When Sunkersett came to know of this, he offered to lend him a building by the side of his own mansion in 1835. A Girls' school was set up there under the auspices of the Students' Literary and Scientific Society in August 1849 and it is still flourishing.

Jugannath Sunkersett was an advocate of English education no doubt, but he did not like that English should be the medium of instruction. In May, 1847 he wrote an able Minute as a Member of the Board of Education supporting the cause of Marathi and Gujarati as the media of higher education. He wrote that these languages possessed advantages superior to the English tongue as the media for communicating useful knowledge to the people of Western India. One could learn a foreign language quickly only when he was well-grounded in his own language. He laid the greatest emphasis on the feasibility of communicating the ideas one had gathered to his countrymen through the medium of the mother tongue of the people. He clearly stated that it would be impossible to teach the masses in English because of its fundamental difference with the Indian languages. He reminded the authorities that those who had subscribed to the Elphinstone Professorship Fund had stipulated that the Vernacular languages were not to be

neglected, but carefully fostered and improved. His attitude towards Education was fundamentally different from that of Raja Rammohun Roy. While the Raja showed exceptional solicitude for the cultivation of European science and technology by the Intellectuals, Jugannath Sunkersett mainly looked to the interest of the masses. The latter pointed out that an insignificant proportion of the whole population of India was acquainted with the English language and literature. The masses had neither the means nor any chance of learning that language. In conclusion he wrote : "If our object is to diffuse knowledge and improve the minds of the natives of India as a people, it is my opinion that it must be done by imparting that knowledge to them in their own language. By what other channel can we ever hope to extend the advantages of Education generally to our females? I repeat, I am far from wishing to discourage the study of English, but I believe it to be beyond the reach of the masses of people. I cannot at the same time help remarking that the encouragement which we provide to Vernacular Education is far less than what the real interest of Native Education demands; the Masters' pay is so small and we have never as yet conferred any scholarship on Vernacular students."⁶

Sunkersett took a leading part in establishing the Bombay Association. The Deccan Association which had been formed in January, 1852, by the Sardars and Inamdars of Poona incurred the displeasure of the Government and ceased to function. Caution was, therefore, needed in organising another political association in Western India. Jugannath Sunkersett invited a few leading citizens of Bombay to his bungalow on August 18, 1852. As the response was good, a public meeting was organised on August 26 in the Elphinstone Institute. It was decided to form the Bombay Association. Sunkersett delivered the inaugural address from which we can learn the attitude of the first batch of Bombay leaders towards the Government. These leaders did not think of offering any resistance to the Government. They wanted to promote the interests of the people by co-operating with the authorities. Sunkersett said : "I feel confident that the Government will be glad to receive suggestions from an Association of respectable Natives, who intend to enquire

carefully what the interests of the people may require, and seek to promote those interests in a temperate manner through the cooperation of the authorities themselves."⁷

Jugannath Sunkersett was one of the five prominent citizens of Bombay to be nominated to the Legislative Council of the Province in January, 1862. He was the first non-official member of the Legislature to introduce a bill. It was a measure to regulate the protection of the property of the adopted children. Two years later, on July 26, 1864 he moved a bill for regulating and controlling gambling in the city. He died on July 31, 1865. Elaborate speeches dealing with the various qualities of his head and heart were delivered in the Legislative Council on August 2, 1865. No other member of the Legislature, Central or Provincial, had such unique honour. Mr. Ellis said : "In Council the services of the late Member had been invaluable. Though nominated by Sir George Clerk and renominated by Sir Bartle Ferere, he was truly a representative man. It was not that he represented his caste, of which he was the acknowledged head, but in an especial manner he represented the whole Hindu community, of which he had been the recognised leader for a long series of years". He further observed that Sunkersett did not attain his position by virtue of rank or wealth but by strict rectitude of purpose and sheer force of character. He added : "This position gave him such influence and such vast local knowledge, that his views in regard to any public measure affecting the Native Community were always held by Government as of the highest value. In regard to such measures the Government constantly consulted him. He was in effect, a counsellor of the Government outside the Council, and in his word and advice successive administrations in Western India had for many years placed the most implicit confidence."⁸

The Governor of Bombay, as the President of the Legislative Council said : "By the successive Governors of Bombay since the time of Mr. M. Elphinstone their late colleague had been held in the highest esteem." He added that Elphinstone had the advantage of his advice in framing the educational scheme. In conclusion he observed : "But though it was always felt that J. Sunkersett would truly represent the

wishes of the people, with all whose wants and desires he heartily sympathised, still he was always trusted as a true and valued friend of the Government, for he thoroughly understood and sympathised with the policy of the British Government in India."⁹

II. Lokhitawadi (1823-1892)

Lokhitawadi, whose real name was Gopal Hari Deshmukh was one of the earliest writers to speculate on the social and political condition in Western India in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was endowed with considerable originality and constructive genius. Considering the short span of life of most of his contemporaries, he enjoyed a fairly long one. He is credited with the authorship of as many as thirty-six books, but the best of all these was a collection of letters called *Satapatre*, which was originally contributed serially to a Marathi Weekly Journal, called *Prabhakar* between 1848 and 1850. Gopal Hari Deshmukh was a young man of twenty-seven when he completed the series. But the maturity of thought displayed by him at this comparatively early age is really surprising. His later writings are neither so interesting nor so profound. He was so very fond of the term *Lokhitawadi* that he gave his appellation to the monthly magazine started by him at Poona in 1882 and also to the Quarterly Journal founded by him the following year.

Gopal Hari Deshmukh's *Satapatre* reveals the poignant grief felt by the intellectual class of Maharashtra at the loss of political independence of the country. He, however, tried to conceal it as best he could by outward praise of the British Government in India. It was necessary to do so. Otherwise he could not have been allowed to continue in Government service. He was shrewd enough to know that a manifestation of loyalty would afford him the opportunity for disseminating ideas which would one day prepare the people of India to achieve independence. His father, Haripant Deshmukh was a Jagirdar under Baji Rao II and enjoyed an annual income approximating ten thousand rupees. The British Government, however, forfeited the income on his death in 1836. A paltry annual allowance of rupees two hundred was granted to his sons for their education. Gopal Hari got himself admitted to

the Government English School at Poona in 1841. He acquired some degree of proficiency in English language in course of the next three years. He entered Government service as a Translator in 1844 on a salary of Rs. 77 per month. His skill, hard work and efficiency earned him promotion. He became a Sub-Assistant Inam Commissioner in 1855 and held the post of Assistant Inam Commissioner on the eve of the outbreak of the Indian War of Independence. He rose consistently till he was promoted to the rank of Joint Sessions Judge. He retired from Government service in 1879. He was nominated a member of the Bombay Legislative Council next year. His official career shows that he was a man of extraordinary ability. But nothing reveals his unusual grasp of trend of events more than his *Satapatre*.

Lokhitawadi anticipated Ranade in more than one respect. Like Ranade, he considered social reforms absolutely necessary for the political emancipation of India. Unlike Tilak, he advocated equal rights for men and women as well as for the members of all the castes. Like Ranade again, he regarded British rule in India as divinely ordained. It was through a process of regeneration and purification that India could regain her independence. He was, however, so very radical in his prescription of the method of achieving self-government that he may be called the Morning Star of the National Movement in India.

Of all the persons who imbibed Western culture and education in India in the first half of the last century Lokhitawadi was the first to ponder deeply over the causes which were responsible for the loss of our independence. The Marhattas were on the point of seizing supreme political power over the whole of the vast sub-continent of India in the middle of the eighteenth century. They ruled over an extensive dominion even at the beginning of the nineteenth century. No thoughtful son of Maharashtra could ever forget that glorious part played by heroes like Shivaji, Baji Rao I and Nana Fadnavis in the history of India. The Hindus of eastern, northern and southern India could not have been animated by such regrets for the subjugation of Indians under the heels of foreign rulers. Gopal Hari Deshmukh attributed the loss of Indian independence to eight causes. First, the Indians did

not care to enquire what was happening abroad. They were taken unawares by the strong current of world politics. Secondly, the masses were kept in ignorance. They were not taught the Sanskrit language in which the best ideas of Indian culture had been expressed. No attempt had been made in later ages to improve the Sanskrit language, which became stagnant in course of time. Thirdly, the Brahmanas whose hereditary duty was to cultivate the Sanskrit language did not care to do so, because their privileges and superior status in society depended on their birth and not on the acquisition of knowledge. Thus the darkness of ignorance enveloped practically all the classes in society. Fourthly, no endeavour was made to change the customs and habits of the people to suit the exigencies of time. The rules which had been promulgated to meet the peculiar circumstances of an age were not changed even when the situation had become radically different. Fifthly, the people were under the grip of a spirit of despondency. They believed that no improvement could be effected in the *Kali Yuga* or Iron age which had already begun. Sixthly, they got themselves reconciled to the wretched condition under which they lived because of their faith in Fate. They thought that whatever was decreed by Fate was bound to happen and it was useless to try to improve one's lot. Seventhly, many people argued that there was no need of changing what was coming from days of yore, because the omniscient Rishis had ordained it. This engendered lethargy, slothfulness and a spirit of blind submission to all the legacies of the past, however harmful they might be at present. Lastly, whatsoever was in existence, whether in the civic, political or social field, was considered to be sacrosanct. Though there was some overlapping in the eight causes mentioned above, yet it must be admitted that Lokhitawadi evinced remarkable power of analysing the psychological factors which conspired to deprive India of her independence.¹⁰ Lokhitawadi further elaborated these ideas in his *Letter on Thought for To-morrow*. He regretted that no one cared to think of the future. Everyone depended on Fate. Baji Rao did not care to consider what would happen to the Maratha people if the English were to attack them. When the Moslems, the Portugese and the English entered India, the Hindus were generally ignorant of their presence. The Moslems ruled

over India for nearly seven hundred years, yet the Hindus did not care even to ascertain what territories were under their occupation.

According to Lokhitawadi the Hindu Society had been decomposed. Each one felt that he was alone. Self was put before the interests of the society. Everyone was bent on self-aggrandisement only. Thus the Peshwa was thinking of attacking Tipu Sultan, the Holkar of attacking the Sindhia and the Gaekwer of Baroda of attacking the Pawar community.

He held the caste system to be mainly responsible for this state of affairs. He regarded it as a sort of disease which was difficult to cure. He cited some examples to show that the caste system was originally elastic in character. A person could pass from one caste to another by virtue of his knowledge, powers and aptitude. The status of a person is determined in other countries of the world by occupation he pursues. An intelligent person does not find it difficult to climb the social ladder in those countries. But India at present is reluctant to follow either the example of the ancient period or the precedence set up by societies in foreign countries.¹¹ While there is solidarity in advanced societies in the West, India suffers from disunity because of the existence of thousands of castes. Lokhitawadi attributes the fall of India also to early marriage, prohibition of remarriage of widows, and denial of equal rights to women. He categorically states that child-marriage system is a positive obstruction to social development. A boy of fifteen is married and nobody takes care of his education. Boys should, first of all, get themselves educated and trained. After having finished their education or period of training they should decide about their marriage and family life. But the same option or privilege of choosing their life's partner should be given to women also. Why should such freedom be restricted to men only? He was probably the first champion of the rights of women in social matters. He was bold enough to assert that women should have equal rights with men. Unless this is conceded, the sufferings and privations which they were undergoing could not be put an end to.

Lokhitawadi championed the cause of widow-remarriage in theory, if not in practice. He was of opinion that the Hindu

scriptures did not prohibit the remarriage of widows. But even if we cannot adduce proofs to show the sanction of the shastras in this matter, we need not be deterred from introducing a salutary reform. We are practising much which is unknown to the Shastras. Custom is the chief sanction behind such observance. It is rather surprising to find Lokhitawadi arguing for adapting social conduct to the changing circumstances of the time. He argued that even if re-marriage of widows had been prohibited by religion, efforts should be made to improve the religion itself. Rules and regulations which suited the Vedic age might not be suitable to the present time. Religion, therefore, should be considered as a developing science, and not as something static in character.¹² Lokhitawadi attended a widow-remarriage ceremony and the mother-in-law of his daughter compelled him to undergo *Prayaschitta* or purification by threatening that she would marry off her son again unless Lokhitawadi conforms to orthodox social rules and practices.

He was in favour of judging social question from rationalistic as well as utilitarian point of view. For example, he regarded the re-marriage of widows as a step forward in the advancement of moral condition of the people, because it would minimise the risk of adultery. Critics of Lokhitawadi point out that he had not the courage of conviction. He failed to practise what he preached. The same charge was levelled against Ranade when on the death of his first wife he failed to marry a widow.

Like Raja Rammohun Roy Lokhitawadi regarded the British rule in India as a great boon. But like the Raja again, he was quite confident that the foreign domination would not last for ever. While the Raja was content with merely suggesting that when the day would come for the termination of British rule in India, the two countries should remain friendly to each other. Gopal Hari Deshmukh discussed elaborately how India should regain her independence. It was, therefore, rather uncharitable on the part of Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar to criticise him as a blind admirer of the British. His only fault was that he could not give expression to the sentiment expressed in 1841 by persons like Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar who denounced the British rule in

India as the "most bitter curse India has ever been visited with."¹² Gopal Hari Deshmukh could not be blind to the merits of British people. They were, according to him, much wiser than the Hindus and their art of governing, fighting and even the conducting of trading operations was much better than that of ours. Indians should, therefore, utilise to the fullest extent the opportunity afforded by the British rule over India. English education should be widely diffused and the sciences should be largely cultivated. These measures were not necessarily for securing a few more jobs but for achieving the independence of India.

One of the causes for his admiration of the British rule was that it brought into India the ideas of equality and social justice. Neither under the Hindu nor under the Moslem rulers was there any idea of making all sections of people equal before the eyes of law. Lokhitawadi felt that the British rule did give a severe blow to the caste system. For the first time the people felt that no caste had special privileges and none was condemned to remain unprivileged for ever.

But all these factors did not make Lokhitawadi blind to the defects of the British rule. He pointed out that many people including the Bhats and the Brahmanas were not at all happy with the British Government. The people had been getting better kind of justice even under the Holkar and the Sindhia. The British rulers did not understand the needs of the people as prescribed by their religion. He cited an example that the Magistrates and petty officers required their subordinates to attend office at such an hour that the latter could not find time to take their bath and offer prayers to God. The example given above illustrates how the orthodox people found it difficult to adjust themselves to the exigencies of modern administration. He levelled much more serious charges against the British rule. Corruption prevailed on a wide scale. Many of the English officers were neither wise nor intelligent. Some of them even took bribe and no one could have access to them without paying tips to the Chaprasis attending on them. The system of recruitment to subordinate offices was faulty. The English officials who appointed these persons did not take into consideration the educational qualifications and moral character of the applicants but were

guided by other irrelevant criteria. People who owed their appointment to recommendations and other extraneous circumstances could not but succumb to the temptation of accepting bribes. Some of the high English officials had neither the patience nor the linguistic qualification to go through the papers they were required to sign. They, therefore, merely put their signature above the dotted line. Thus the subordinates could get ample opportunity for misusing their power. He complained that ninety-per cent of British officers came to India merely for making money and not for rendering service to the people of India. Adducing such arguments he pleaded for the Indianisation of services even in the forties of the last century. He wrote : "If our people become wise and give up the habit of taking bribe, they will do hundred times better work than these 'Sahibs'. They know the language of the people, the ignorance of which is the greatest drawback of the 'Sahibs'. Our people have better aptitude of doing better type of work."¹⁴

In spite of his being a Government servant, Lokhitawadi was bold enough to assert that the British domination over India would not last for ever. He saw in their rule the hand of God. Providence had sent them to educate the people of India and to remove their evil customs and practices. As soon as this mission would be fulfilled, God would make them withdraw from India. He could not, however, visualise that within a century of the publication of his *Satapatre* India would regain her independence. Even if he expected this to happen he was shrewd enough to hide such a feeling in the following words : A child takes ten or twenty years to become educated. "A country, then must require two or four hundred years to become reformed. As a child receives punishment in the school, the people are receiving it (under the alien rule)."¹⁵ The memory of the days of self-government was so fresh in the mind of every intelligent Marathi that he could not but regard the foreign rule as a sort of punishment. Such an expression of feeling, therefore, makes it impossible to regard him as a blind admirer of the British Government.

Had he really believed that the British rule in India would last for two or four hundred years, he would not have advised his countrymen to petition to the Queen of England

on the eve of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. Instead of 1833 he regarded 1834 as the date of the renewal of the Charter and wrote that it would again be renewed in 1854. The margin of error is only one year and this was probably due to his carelessness. The important fact, however, was that even before the organisation of the British Indian Association in Calcutta he had the sagacity to suggest the following:- "The poor as well as the rich people of India should make a petition to the Queen of England pointing out to her how the system of administration in India was not conducive to the advantages of Indians, how our rights are being neglected and discrimination was being made between the Indians and the English." He further suggested that in order to remove the discrimination and to administer impartial justice a Parliament should be set up in India. He held that such a Parliament should meet at Bombay and the Governor should be its president. As he did not mention the Governor-General, it might be surmised that he was thinking of Provincial Assemblies. He also supplied a scheme for organising the Indian Parliament in the following words : "Every city and every district should send two deputies to this Parliament. The deputies should be selected from among the people of all castes. The deputies must be good speakers, intelligent persons and also be endowed with statesmanship, because they would have to participate in the process of Government."¹⁶ On another occasion he wrote: "We should demand Parliamentary system with a view to removing poverty in India."¹⁷ In a letter on the reform of the administrative system he suggested that the English should follow in India the same system of government which they observe in England. He was conscious of the fact that at the beginning it would be difficult to get suitable persons for representing the people in the Indian Parliament. But he suggested that those amongst the Brahmanas and Moslems who were working as Deputy Magistrates should be sent to England for being trained in Parliamentary work. Such persons should be selected on the basis of merit and not on the basis of the caste or community to which they belonged. If intelligent Indians go to England, they would see for themselves how democracy functions.¹⁸

Gopal Hari Deshmukh was quite confident that the English would be good enough to concede Parliamentary form of government to India if the people demand it with one voice. With extraordinary naivety he writes : "When the Indians become wise, they will tell the English that they want a Parliament like that of English. When our people sit in Parliament they will say that they have become wise like the English and they should, therefore, be entrusted with power. If the Hindus support this demand by majority vote, the British Government will have to grant it."¹⁹ Here it is noteworthy that he was thinking of the Hindus only, and not of the Moslem community. This omission was most probably due to his carelessness, because we have seen that he pleaded for training up the Moslems in England for parliamentary work.

He warned the British rulers that if they failed to respond to the demands of Indians, there would occur a repetition of what had happened to their domination in America. Indians would tell the British that as they themselves were quite competent to carry on the administration they no longer required the guidance and control of their Gurus. The people would thus make themselves independent and tell the British to go back to their own country.²⁰ He suggested certain essential requisites for achieving independence. First, all Indians must consider India as their mother and the people as their brethren. Without such a feeling it would be impossible to liberate the country. Secondly, the caste system must be abolished. It retards the growth of unity of the people. Thirdly, Indians must learn new sciences and new techniques. Fourthly, bribery, corruption and nepotism must be rooted out and selection of officers should be made on the basis of merit and merit alone. According to him intellectual superiority should be accompanied by honesty of purpose and integrity in conduct. Lastly, autonomy of villages should be restored. If all these were achieved, Indians were sure to get a type of government hundred times better than what they had been accustomed to under the British domination.

Lokhitawadi laid great emphasis on the fact that a people got the government it deserved. He said that in a primitive and backward community the government acts either as the

guardian or as the thief. In a moderately advanced country the Government is the friend of the people. But in a country which is sufficiently advanced, the Government is treated like the servant of the people.²¹ He held up the ideal of pure democracy before the Indian people. By pure democracy he did not mean direct democracy. To him the type of government prevalent in the United States of America appeared to be pure. He considered the British Government as an example of the mixed type, as it provided for monarchy as well as parliamentary rule.²² From this we may conclude that Lokhitawadi was in favour of a republic, and not of a monarchical form of Government in India. To him the best form of government was democracy. He stated categorically: "A democratic government is necessary for making the people happy. The laws that are made for a country must have the consent of the people of that country."²³ He hoped that the establishment of democratic government in British India would make the subjects of the Princely states realise the superiority of democracy over autocracy. "The people", he wrote, "will come to know whether they are more happy in a democracy or under an autocracy. They will know whether the Scindia or the Nizam of Hyderabad are good rulers and will know what is a good rule. This lesson will make other states democratic and the Hindus will give up the habit of meek submission to the oppressive rule of an autocrat." He cited the example of the third French Revolution, 1848 and in explaining the cause of the fall of Louis Philippe, he wrote, "The Europeans consider the promotion of national welfare as the prime duty of the king. When the king oppresses them or exploits them, they revolt and set up the government by the people." With a sense of regret he noted that Indians being accustomed to autocracy did not understand the meaning of revolution. He recalled the instance of the beheading of Charles I of England for his autocratic rule.

The most remarkable feature about the *Satapatre* is that the writer suggested in it the use of *Swadeshi* goods and the boycotting of articles imported from England one hundred years before the achievement of Indian Independence. He exhorted his countrymen to stop the import of foreign goods and advised them "to purchase only those things that are produced here. Why should we bother even if we are required

to use rough native cloth instead of fine British cloth." In several of his *Satapatre* letters he reiterated the view that we should manufacture here all the goods we require. He wrote: "Our people should make a firm determination jointly not to buy foreign goods; they should buy only home-made articles, although inferior in quality. We should use our own cloth, our own umbrellas and so on. Thus we will be able to retain our money in our own country. All the merchants and producers should resolve to sell to the British people only the finished Indian goods and not the raw materials."²⁴ Later in his life he translated Dadabhai Naoroji's famous work *Poverty in India* into Marathi and in course of a lengthy introduction explained how India was being exploited by the British. With surprisingly modern outlook he advised the people in his *Satapatre* to stop all unnecessary expenses over religious ceremonies and social functions like marriage and save capital for investment on manufactures. He also suggested that the necessary capital for industries should be collected from the rulers of Indian states, *jagirdars* and *inamdars*.

With advancement of years Gopal Hari Deshmukh came to realise that it was not possible to persuade the English to concede the right of self-government to Indians, nor was it easy to coerce them by threats of economic boycott. He, therefore, pinned his faith in the revival of village communities. These had been destroyed by the centralising policy of the British Government. They had to run to the courts in towns for getting their simple cases decided there. This meant considerable wastage of time and money. Moreover, the rural people had fallen under the grip of money-lenders, because they were required to pay the taxes in cash and not in kind. He advocated the revival of village organisation in a book called *Grama Rachana*. In another small pamphlet of 36 pages he asked his fellow countrymen to avail themselves of the facilities afforded by Lord Ripon in his scheme for local self-government. He wrote: "We must develop the ability to rule and gain administrative experience. We should not allow our country to be drained off its wealth by a foreign country, in the form of salaries to its officers and the purchase of manufactured goods." Thus we find that Gopal Hari Deshmukh was one of the earliest exponents of Indian Nationalism, both in the political and economic aspects.

III. Dr. Bhau Dajee (1821-1874)

Dr. Bhau Dajee was one of the best products of English education. In 1844 he won a prize for writing the best essay on "The Evils of Infanticide." His position in the Bombay society in the middle of the last century was unique. He was by far the most eminent Indian physician in the Presidency town. He discovered a cure for leprosy in its early stages. His fame as an orientalist of great talent travelled beyond India. He was the first Indian Sheriff of Bombay, which post he held in 1869 and 1871. His fearless criticism of the British Indian administration and his sincere efforts to rouse the political consciousness of his countrymen made him the first and most prominent leader of the people.

Dr. Bhau Dajee was not a political philosopher. He did not try his hand at composing any set treatise on political science. But he showed penetrating insight and wonderful wealth of learning and information in the Memorials he wrote on behalf of the Bombay Association on the 26th August, 1852. Dr. Bhau Dajee was really the brain behind the Association. It was he who drafted the petitions to Parliament in the early days of the Association.*

Dr. Bhau Dajee appears to be the severest critic of the system of government which prevailed in India under the East India Company. He denounced it as unnecessarily costly, cumbrous and inefficient. In his address before the first annual General meeting of the Bombay Association he said: "We were to have three separate sets of the Government of India, the principal function of each of which seems to be to thwart and retard the operations of the others—the Leadenhall Street Division costing £ 130,000 a year, being merely the Ministers of patronage, and place of record, without one atom of power beyond that of suggesting, criticising and obstructing; the Board of Control, costing £ 250,000 a year, managed by a President, appointed without any necessary qualification to the office, whose average tenure of office has since 1820 fallen short of two years, void

* *The Native Opinion*, May 22, 1870: "The first petition which the Association sent up was the framework of Dr. Bhau."

of all responsibility, endowed with absolute power, governing in secret, and presenting to Parliament, when asked for information, collection of papers so infamously curtailed and garbled as to mislead in place of enlightening; and whose main contributions to the policy of India during the past twenty years have been wars, which have cost thirty million sterling, including amongst them the Scinde infamy, and Kabul disaster. We have three Governments in India, costing half a million sterling amongst them, so completely under a parcel of London clerks as to be compelled to send home particulars of everything they say or do to be commented on, checked and controlled by parties incapable from position of forming a correct opinion on what they decide;—and finally, in India we have had public education neglected, improvement thrown aside, irrigation and the means of communication overlooked, though to neglect such as this we have, since the Charter Act of 1833, been indebted for famines, which have swept away nearly two millions of human beings, and sacrificed to Government about eight million sterling—a sum which, if properly expended, would have been sufficient to have averted for ever the calamities by which in a year its loss was occasioned.”²⁵

From these general charges against the very system of government he came to specific charges against the executive authorities in India. In the second petition of the Bombay Association, which Dr. Bhau drafted in May, 1853, he alleged that the secretaries to the government were not competent to handle the questions they were called upon to decide. These secretaries were recruited from the Civil Service; they had been trained to discharge routine duties; but as secretaries they were called upon to decide questions ‘requiring for their solution a correct knowledge of the principles of finance, of political economy, of the systems of the country and of other countries, involving the rights and just expectations of classes and persons and the cases and privileges of individuals’.²⁶ Taking for granted that they had the broad outlook requisite for the solution of such questions, they could not have the time to go through carefully the multifarious matters with which they were overwhelmed. Hence, they had to throw off as much of their own duties as possible on the European district officers.

These district officers had to look after large territories. They, in their turn, had to depend on their own subordinates, some of whom were trustworthy, and some were not. But the reports that these subordinates sent to the district officers were treated as equally trustworthy. Dr. Bhau comes to this conclusion: "The necessary result of this system is, that the Government is one of first impressions, that, short-handed as it is, under the present system, its chief difficulty and its main object is to keep down and despatch business; to despatch it well, if possible, but at all events to prevent it accumulating; that hasty superficial reports of local officers are, in regulating the conduct of Government except on questions of money, of equal weight with those the result of care and reflection. It is obviously necessary, therefore, to protect the acts of such a Government from public scrutiny and supervision, in order to preserve for it public respect; and the most rigid secrecy is consequently preserved in every department."

Dr. Bhau Dajee pointed out another grave defect in the executive branch of the Government of British India. The Civil Service formed, as it were, a caste and a close corporation. The young officers being entrusted with great powers developed despotic tendencies. They were intolerant of all suggestions of improvement emanating from independent and disinterested sources. The effect of such a policy was a cramp "all agricultural or commercial energy and all individual enterprise."

Dr. Bhau uttered a word of warning against such a policy. In his address before the first annual General meeting of the Bombay Association (1853) he emphatically asserted: "The British Government professes to educate the Natives to an equality with Europeans, an object worthy of the age and of Britain; but if Englishmen, after educating the Natives to be their equals, continue to treat them as inferiors if they deny the stimulus to honourable ambition, and show the Natives that there is a barrier over which superior Native merit and ambition can never hope to pass, and that these are considered traits which a Native cannot hope to exhibit—are they not in effect undoing all that they have done, unteaching the Native all that he has been taught, and pursuing a suicidal

policy, which will inevitably array all the talent, honour, and intelligence of the country ultimately in irreconcilable hostility to the ruling power?"

The remedy which Dr. Bhau suggested for removing the defects of the British Indian administration was to admit qualified Indians freely in the legislature and in the executive as well as judicial departments. As regards the Legislature, the first petition of the Bombay Association to Parliament stated that "the time has arrived when the Natives of India are entitled to a much larger share than they have hitherto had in the administration of the affairs of their country, and that the Councils of the local Governments should, in matters of general policy and legislation, be opened, so as to admit of respectable and intelligent natives taking a part in the discussion of matters of general interest to the country, as suggested by Lord Ellenborough, Elphinstone and others.²⁷ The second petition suggested that the Legislative Council should consist of Judges of the Supreme Court and European and Indian citizens. The Legislative Council should be entrusted not only with the function of making laws but also with the task of criticising administration of the country. The Bombay Association begged the Parliament to "put an end to that injurious system of secrecy which at present is the ruling principle of vice in the Indian administration, and to allow the council to call for the proceedings of Government and its local officers, except in cases in which the Executive shall declare that State policy requires secrecy to be preserved."

The leaders of the Bombay Presidency along with their brethren in Bengal claimed that the Indianisation of executive and judicial services would make the administration pure and efficient. The second petition of the Bombay Association stated: "At present the Natives of this country, however respectable, trustworthy and qualified they may be, are excluded from the higher grade of judicial and Revenue situations, and from the regular Medical Service, to which Covenanted European servants sent out from England are alone appointed; such exclusion being impolitic, unjust and contrary to the letter and spirit of the 87th Section of the Charter Act of 1834. Your petitioners respectfully reiterate their prayer that the invidious and unjustifiable distinction

between the covenanted and uncovenanted service, which excludes the Natives from the higher offices be abolished, and that Natives of India may be allowed to fill all situations for which they may be qualified. By the adoption and practical operation of such a measure, a great stimulus will, your petitioners feel convinced, be given to the cause of education and improvement in this country; a great deal of discontent will be removed, and inefficiency will be obviated."

Dr. Bhau Dajee was not unaware of the fact that Indians qualified for filling up responsible posts were difficult to find in that age. He suggested, therefore, that a college should be established to impart thorough knowledge to candidates for the Bench and to those who would practise in the Bar. He also made the following pertinent observation in his address before the first annual General meeting of the Bombay Association:—As to the argument that the Natives cannot be trusted in places of great responsibility, it is admirably met by Mirabeau, in a work dedicated to the King of Prussia. He says something to this effect: 'If the Jews are so degraded a race that you cannot trust them with the rights of citizens, if you desire a reformed generation, it is only by teaching them what those rights are, and how they can be exercised, that you can hope to improve them. Begin this immediately. Until they are accustomed to the exercise of their rights there can be no reformed generation; the only thing you cannot regain is lost time.'

IV. *Visnu Bawa Brahmachari* (1825-1871)

The only bold Utopian in India in the nineteenth century was Visnu Bawa Brahmachari. His original name was Vishnu Bhikaji Gokhale. He was born in 1825 in the district of Thana in the Bombay Presidency. He was a self-educated person. Poverty goaded him to seek an apprenticeship in the Taluka Revenue office at the early age of nine. Sometime afterwards he became an assistant in a grocer's shop and ultimately received a low appointment in the Customs department of the Government. But the prospects of worldly prosperity had little charm for him. He resigned his post at the age of twenty-three and became a recluse. He roamed from place to place in search of spiritual solace but finding little in the company

of ascetics he met, took to the secluded Saptashrungi hills in his home district. He spent several years in meditation and studies in the ancient lore of India and then came out to the world with an inspired message of his own. He published a work in Marathi under the caption *Bhavartha Sindhu* in 1856. He was pained to find that some persons were being lured away into the fold of Christianity, because they were ignorant of the glories of the Vedic religion. He engaged himself in combating the influence of the Christian missionaries and wrote a voluminous work called *Vedokta Dharma Prakasa* of 750 pages, and got it published in 1859 from Bombay. It deals with metaphysics, religion, socio-economic history and institutions and occasionally refers to the contemporary political condition. The one idea which haunted him day and night was to find out a way of putting an end to the misery of the people, not only of India alone, but of the whole world. He was a brilliant orator. He travelled all over Maharastra and visited Varansi and Calcutta also preaching the Vedic religion. In 1867 he wrote in Marathi the *Sukha-dayaka Rajya-prakarani Nibanda*, a small booklet of twenty-four pages divided into fifteen sections. He got this remarkable treatise translated into English in 1869. He did not know English at all. The central theme of the book is to suggest such a method of conducting the affairs of the state as will put an end to poverty, malice, ill-will and quarrels amongst different sections of society and also in the international field. Ten thousand copies of the English translation entitled *An Essay on the Welfare State* were printed and circulated amongst members of the British Parliament and other influential persons.

Though a Sannyasin and a student of the Vedic lore, Visnu Bawa was not a mere revivalist. His outlook on life was surprisingly modern. He had no scruples in taking the food cooked by the Muslim cook he engaged while travelling on a coastal ship. He did not believe in untouchability. He encouraged the so-called depressed classes to hear his discourses along with high-caste Hindus. According to him, the taking of meat and drinking of wine make one liable to be untouchable.²⁸ He raised his voice against the practice of keeping women confined indoors. He advocated the abolition of the *Purdah* but did not believe in the equal rights of men

and women. In domestic affairs he liked women to be obedient to men. He welcomed English education and learning. He was modern enough to suggest the extension of railways and telegraphs for the facility of trade, transport and communication.²⁹

Visnu Bawa Brahmachari did not care to adduce many arguments in his teachings and preachings. Thus at the beginning of his *Essay on the Welfare State* he states like a prophet: "All men on the earth, including the *Mlechchas* and others, all castes, are certainly fit to receive the true teachings of the Vedas. *This is my inspired commandment* (italics ours). Mankind is one. This is true knowledge. After realising this truth, a *Mukta* should teach others. This will secure the welfare of all." The writer considered himself to be liberated.

He claimed to have the true knowledge of such principles of Government as would promote universal peace and happiness. He writes: "There are many states in the world, but their rulers, who carry on their government do not understand the principles of ideal politics, nor the methods of politics which will prevent people from committing offences and crimes. Due to this all the rulers and the people—the whole of mankind—are all the time engrossed in cares and are wandering in despair. Thus we find that everybody is unhappy." He, therefore, asked the rulers to follow the principles laid down in the work. He assures them that this will solve all their worldly difficulties and they will be able to practise devotion to God without any worldly desires to disturb them. This will lead to their realisation of divine truth and of fellowship amongst peoples. Men will develop noble qualities of philanthropy, forgiveness and peace." To Visnu Bawa true knowledge of eternal truth, devotion to God and manifestation of brotherly feeling to all human beings are the essential ingredients of good government. He is preaching here the essentials of the *Bhagavada-Gita* and building up a synthesis of *Jnana*, *Karma* and *Bhakti*. If a person can realise the fundamental unity of all living beings, he will be free from greed, avarice and malice towards others. Actuated by such an ideal Visnu Bawa advises: "All people are to be considered as one family, and all land and wealth to be of common proprietorship of

one garden. Whatever is produced, is to belong to all in common. If political organisation is based on these principles all people would get all enjoyments, all good things to eat, plenty of clothes to wear, and other luxuries and ornaments; all would be able to see dances, dramas, gatherings, all would get good conveyances to ride."

It may be noticed that the Sannyasin knows that material things like food and clothing do not satisfy all the cravings of men. They want to have a share in the joys of life. He, therefore, provides for their free admission to dance, dramas and other festive gatherings. Women have got natural desire for bedecking themselves with fine clothes and jewellery. If, however, clothes and ornaments are to be allowed to remain in individual possession, jealousy and quarrel would ensue. He, therefore, prescribed that clothes should be manufactured and stocked in villages. These should be given to those who need it. Though himself a selfless recluse, he knows that the production of ornaments cannot be altogether banned. He, therefore, writes: "Even ornaments should be prepared and kept at various places and should be made available to all those who want them. Similarly, weapons, machines etc should be kept and distributed." He did not go into the details of the problems of production and distribution. The fact that production is limited while the desire of men is unlimited did not appear to him to be a complex problem at all. Probably he imagined that the abolition of private property would increase production to such an extent that there would be no difficulty in meeting everybody's wants.

The satisfaction of wants of all persons would mean the elimination of anger. The *Gita* has identified desire or *Kama* with anger. Visnu Bawa comes to the conclusion that 'when there is no anger, there would be no crime committed, nor there would be any desire or motive for crime'. He again reminds his readers that all the people really belong to the same family and all should be actuated by brotherly feeling towards one another. He states emphatically that the food which, according to him, is the chief wealth for all, should be common, and all necessities of life are also to be held in common. He adds: "If the Government is not organised on this principle, all people would commit crimes against one another,

cheat one another, kill one another and abuse God." He deplores the fact that while a few are getting plenty, thousands are dying of hunger and famine.

He next turns his attention to the international field, where he finds bitter feuds prevailing amongst the big Powers of the world. He writes: "The English, French, Russians, Republican Americans, Chinese, Indians, Central Asiatics, rulers of Asia, Europe, Africa and America and all islands of the world quarrel with and kill one another. The main reason for this calamity is that the system of Government and its policy of considering all people as One, as described above, is not found anywhere in the world. But if it were followed, then all people would be happy. The sin of people's crimes, misery and poverty rests on the head of the rulers, because their system of government and policy are not based on right principles." He declares again that the basic principle of politics, political thought and organisation should be the fellow feeling and love for one another. Mere economic and political devices or institutions cannot usher in an era of peace, happiness and prosperity of all the peoples of the world.

To Visnu Bawa Brahmachari the State appears as the universal employer and the sole producer. He advises the rulers to start "new useful industries at various places, improve old industries, and manage them with the help of organised bodies. Every labourer or worker should be given his fixed wages regularly either daily or monthly. All people should be employed in cultivating land." This statement suffers from lack of clarity and precision. If all the people are to be engaged in cultivation, who will conduct and operate the industries? He could not have suggested that the industrial operations should be carried on merely in the slack seasons of cultivation. The writer concerned himself with the laying down of some broad principles leaving the details to be worked out by the ruling classes later on.

His ideas on marriage, rearing up of children and their education bear a striking resemblance to Plato's *Republic*. It is possible that he had come across the thought-currents of Plato in course of his conversation with some learned scholars of Poona. He writes: "Marriage should be arranged and performed by the Matrimonial department of the Government.

Divorce and remarriage should be under the control of the Government. Children above five years of age should be under the control of the Government. They should be educated according to their merit. In old age there should be no work. Old people should be provided with food."

The ideas propagated in this booklet were startling to the Indians as well as Europeans. The Press in this country did not receive the work cordially. The writer was denounced as a visionary and an iconoclast. Some close students of political thought of Maharashtra to-day characterise Visnu Bawa's writings as uncritical, unrealistic and desultory.³⁰ Such a view, however, is uncharitable and one-sided. It ignores the fine idealism of the recluse thinker. Prof. Puntambekar rightly considers him as the propounder of a *Manava Dharma*—a human world order based on Vedantic teachings. In summing up his *Essay on the Welfare State* the learned Professor states: "He laid emphasis first on political reform, then on economic reform and lastly on social reform. Moral reform, according to him, follows automatically when motives of anger and crime due to unfulfilled wants are removed. Then there would result a good man and an ideal state."³¹

Visnu Bawa Brahmachari was not a political philosopher. His primary interest lay in the spiritual uplift of mankind. It is remarkable that in 1867 he wrote the *Sukha-dayaka-Rajya-prakarani Nibandha* as well as a commentary on the *Chatuṣloki Bhagavata* (II. 9. 32-35). Next year he wrote a short work entitled *Sahaja Sthiticha Nibandha*—an Essay on the Natural State. He deserves an honourable place in the history of political ideas of India, because in the sixties of the last century he had the boldness to enunciate the broad outlines of Utopian Socialism in this country.

V. Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalli (1831-93)

Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengali was a remarkable political thinker of Western India in the second half of the last century. His father, Narojee Sorabjee Umrigor was a merchant in Calcutta and built a Tower of Silence in 1822. His surname, Bengalli is indicative of his father's close association with Bengal. He was educated in the Education Society's

School which later on became famous as the Elphinstone High School, Bombay. He had the good fortune of being under the instruction of Naorojee Furdonjee, the teacher of Dadabhai Naorojee. Bengalli became the editor of the *Bombay Samachar* in 1849, when he was barely eighteen years of age.³² In 1850 he started another paper called *Jagat Mitra* in Gujarati, but it had a brief span of life.³³ In 1851 he along with Naorojee Furdonjee established an organization called the *Rahunmai Majadiyasne* with the object of creating public opinion amongst the Parsis in favour of discarding "harmful customs which prevailed on occasions of marriage and death" in their community. He was the Secretary of this association from 1853 to 1856 and became its President in 1864. He was a pioneer in introducing social reforms through the agency of the State. He organized the Parsi Law Association in 1855 and succeeded in securing the enactment of the Parsi Succession Act (Act X of 1865) and the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act (Act XV of 1865) through this organization. The latter was the result of propaganda carried on for more than a decade. It put an end to the confusion which prevailed amongst the Parsis as to which domestic law was to be applied by the Court to them. The Act was modelled on the English Divorce Act of 1858. It allowed Divorce and promoted the emancipation of Parsi women. With legitimate pride Bengalli could claim in 1868 that the Parsis were the first among all purely Asiatic communities to have voluntarily imposed on themselves a law declaring bigamy a criminal offence.³⁴

The greatest achievement of Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalli was to promote the first Factory Act of India in 1881. He was nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1876 and the first thing which attracted his attention was the miserable condition of children employed in the cotton mills of Bombay. Many of these children belonged to the age group of five to seven years. They were required to work in the mills from sunrise to sunset, for more than twelve hours with a break of half-an-hour for taking their meal. Their miserable plight moved him so much that he prepared the draft of a bill to "regulate the labour of persons employed in the mills and factories in the Presidency of Bombay" and requested the Provincial Government to make a move in this direction. The

Bombay Government did not take it up. They sought the permission of the Central Government. As no favourable reply came from the Government of India, Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalli sent copies of the bill to England requesting Her Majesty to instruct the Indian authorities to pass a law regulating the employment of children.³⁵ Lord Shaftesbury, who had taken the initiative in making Labour Laws in the United Kingdom moved the House of Lords on April 4, 1879. The writer of his biography in the book entitled *Famous Parsis* claims that it was Bengalli's initiative which induced Lord Shaftesbury to take an interest in the Labour legislation in India. But as a matter of fact, the idea of enacting a Factory law for India was suggested by Lord Shaftesbury in course of a speech in the House of Lords in August, 1875. He said that India had the raw material and cheap labour and if in addition to these Indian manufacturers were allowed to exact labour for 16 or 17 hours a day, a very unfair advantage would be given to them. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* took exception to this and commented: "We do not say that Government should look on with approbation while we overwork our operatives to death. But yet a larger death rate amongst our operatives is far preferable to the collapse of this rising industry. Do not nations go to war and thereby cause the death of hundreds and thousands of their own countrymen? They sacrifice a small portion of their countrymen for the advantage of the majority."³⁸ This is like carrying on the war till the last drop of blood of allies. But Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalli sought to counteract this sort of suggestion by his memorial to Queen Victoria. He appears to have been the first champion of the cause of Labour against Capital. This is all the more remarkable because of the fact that he belonged to the Parsi community which owned the greater number of Cotton mills at that time.

The Factory Bill of 1881 sought to restrict the hours of labour of children between seven and twelve years of age to a maximum of nine hours a day. The Bombay Millowners' Association deprecated the attempt of the Government and wrote that 'legislative interference of any kind was wholly unnecessary and would be most injurious not only to the manufacturing interests of the country, but also to the country generally'. It was estimated that some seven to eight

thousand children were employed in the Cotton Mills in Bombay. While the Factory Bill was being considered in the Supreme Legislative Council, Jotindra Mohan Tagore said that 'any authoritative intervention between Labour and Capital in a country where manufacturing industry was in its infancy was not at all desirable. It appeared, however, that in Bombay competition among the factories had come to such a stage that legislative interference in the interests of operatives was considered by the Local Government to be very much needed, though, as he understood, there was considerable difference of opinion among the outside public. On the other hand, the Bengal Government and intelligent public opinion here held that such a measure was not only unnecessary, but that it would be positively injurious. European capital and European energy were being gradually drawn into this country to its immense advantage, and any uncalled for legislative intervention between labour and capital was, it was believed, sure to operate as a check in that direction, and such a result could not but be considered as a misfortune to the country.'³⁷ He argued that the Factory Act was needed for Bombay but not for Bengal. He was trying to safeguard the interests of the British Capitalists whose freedom to employ little children for long hours was to him far more important than the health of Indian boys. In view of the expression of such opinions the courage displayed by Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalli was indeed heroic.

The Indian Press and public men opposed the Factory Act because it was obvious that the motive behind its passing was not so much humanitarian as it was to safeguard the interests of Lancashire and Manchester. The provisions of the Act were not applicable to Indigo factories, tea or coffee plantations, nor to temporary establishments working for less than four months a year—nor to undertakings providing work on any day for less than one hundred persons. A writer in the *Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha* observed that the Factory Act of 1881 "simply regards the convenience of Tea and Coffee planters and of those engaged in the export Cotton trade to be so great as to justify the Government in overlooking the hardships of children employed in such factories."³⁸

Sorabjee Shapurjee Bengalli's views on the tariff policy of India were as much anti-capitalistic as those on labour legislation. He was a staunch supporter of the Free Trade policy. In course of a letter to Lord Lytton on the question of abolition of import duty on Yarn and Cotton goods, he wrote: "I am strongly of opinion that the best interests of the country require that this new industry or any other industry should thrive or fall on its own merits. I believe that it would be disadvantageous for India if its Government were directed to support industrial and commercial enterprises and encourage the employment of capital in them by means of protective tariffs, a policy which increases the cost of the articles thus protected to the general consumer and, therefore, taxes the resources of the country for the benefit of the capitalists and the creation of distress when the protection is removed."³⁹ Some of his political adversaries suspected him to be an agent of the British interests. But there is hardly any evidence for substantiating such a charge.

Bengalli, like his contemporary Sisir Kumar Ghosh in Bengal, urged the necessity of introducing popular elective element in the municipal corporation. He proposed that half of the members of the municipal council should be elected bi-annually by the rate-payers and the other half should be either nominated directly by the Government or elected by the Bench of Justices of Peace from among themselves. He showed his robust faith in democratic principles by controverting a proposal for giving representation to different castes instead of different wards of the municipality. He wrote: "The value and the serviceableness of municipal representative lies in his residence on the spot and of being appealed to by his constituents on matters affecting local wants and grievances, and this object cannot be fulfilled by the election of caste representative who might reside in different quarters from their constituents. This alone is a sufficient disqualification of the caste representation scheme. Besides, caste organisation in Bombay is not so complete as elsewhere, and its principle need not be recognised in the constitution of our municipalities...I do not see why individuals should be compelled to vote for their castemen alone when they may find it more to their advantage to elect the most competent representative on the spot."

Mr. Bengalli demanded financial adjustment between the Indian states and the India Government on an equitable basis. He pointed out that the Indian states contributed scarcely one crore of rupees out of 17 crores of rupees on military expenditure, from which they derive as much benefit as the territories under the direct government of the British. He proposed that the Indian States should contribute four and half a crores of rupees for this purpose. He further observed,—“The Native states have benefitted by the Railways. They have found better markets for their produce and their revenues have increased in consequence, but they have contributed nothing towards the outlay which has enabled them to obtain these gain.” In this connection he voiced forth another grievance against the Princes in the following words: “The revenues of Native States are treated by their chiefs as if they were private income. When therefore, Native States are not made to pay their just share of the twenty crores expended for the general good of the country, it follows that the money is not saved to the people of these states, but to their rulers.”

VI. Narayan Raghunathji.

Mr. Narayan Raghunathji, the first prominent publicist among the Marhattas, voiced the sense of gratitude which his people felt towards the British Government just at the time when India was being convulsed by the Sepoy Mutiny. In September, 1857 he delivered a lecture at the United Students' Association on “A glance at the past and present of India with observations on the Sepoy Revolt.”⁴⁰ In course of this lecture he made the following observations: “There was no security to life and property; confusion, disorder, tyranny, plunder and murders were common as blackberries. But under the strong arm of British Government we have done away with these things. There is comparative peace and order and it has been truly said that order is heaven's first law. There is no Government in the world so favourable to all liberty, civil political social and religious as the British.” He was a firm believer in the necessity for the continuance of the British rule in India. He exhorted his audience to remember that “if Englishmen were to leave the shores of India to-day, to-

morrow she will become a vast field of carnage, plunder and massacre—in fact, the Hindu race will be extinct.”

Narayan Raghunathji defined the functions of Government under the influence of Bentham as follows: “to give security to the life and prosperity of the members of the community, to promote industry, to produce the greatest happiness of the greatest number.” He held that the British Indian Government in spite of all its limitations performed these functions in a better way than any other government in India in recent times. He observed that the British Government was “best adapted to increase wealth, capital or the means of personal comfort and develop the capabilities of the soil. That, that Government whose main object is to gain the affections of the people by just and benevolent laws, will remain stable and permanent is a fundamental truth in the science of politics.”

VI. Ganesh Wasudeo Joshi

Ganesh Wasudeo Joshi, the founder of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha deserves a special mention in the history of political thought of modern India. In his evidence before the Famine Commission on the 19th February, 1879, he said that his experience with regard to the business in Civil Courts extended to nearly forty years and, therefore, he was conversant with all the defects and malpractices of these Courts. He further informed the Commission that he had visited Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, the Punjab, and several Indian States in connection with Sarvajanik Sabha and the Arbitration Court at Poona. He was the Secretary to the Arbitration Court at Poona and hence his evidence regarding the origin and mode of operation of this Court is of great interest.

Joshi said that from the introduction of the British rule in the Deccan in 1818 up to 1827, Civil business was, for the most part, conducted according to the old practice. Justice was not taxed with stamp duties or such, other duties. Intricate cases were disposed of by arbitration and petty cases of money dealing were disposed of by a Revenue Officer. Intricate cases and stamp duties were introduced by the Regulation

of 1827 and those are heightened by Act I of 1846, Act VIII of 1859, and the Court Fees Act of 1870. He attributes impoverishment of the peasantry partly to the Judicial system and tried to substantiate his argument by the following observations: "The aggregate expenses incurred by parties on account of Court Fees, vakil's or barrister's fees, and such like amount from four to five crores of rupees, whereas the parties do not get adequate return in amount for this enormous expense. The Vakils, the Judges, and their establishments are alone profited by the revenues. As the Government officials are not landholders, the money they get in the form of salaries is not applied towards the improvement of the land, but is spent for their comforts. Thus the ryot has become poor, and rain not having fallen for a year or two, lacs of lives have been lost, and those that have been spared have no capital wherewith to buy bullocks and agricultural implements."⁴¹

Joshi contends that the system of judicial administration has not only impoverished the masses but has also contributed to their moral bankruptcy. He observes: "Inimical feelings between the parties have increased; demoralisation has spread: documents are fabricated to the ruin of each other, and similar other offences of this nature have increased... People are quite convinced that hardly a man can be found who goes into court in connection with any dispute, and returns without telling a lie. Consequently the Judges in India also find it difficult to administer justice. As people waste their time in trifles, most important works are neglected. The legislative machinery is at work; and although the object of making laws is to make people happy, yet each new law, instead of making people happier, makes them poorer."

VIII. *Visvanath Narayan Mandalik* (1833-1889)

Rai Sahib Visvanath Narayan Mandalik was one of the most brilliant students of the Elphinstone Institute, and became the leader of the young Maratha School of political thought. He was one of the pioneers in social, educational, religious and political reforms in Maharashtra in modern times. He resigned from Government service in 1862 and became a pleader. In 1865 he was appointed a Justice of

Peace and in 1874 a member of the Bombay Legislative Council.* He was an erudite scholar in History, Politics and Economics, and his writings are replete with references to the classical books on those subjects.

He started the *Native Opinion*, a weekly newspaper in English in 1864 and conducted it till 1871. Most of the editorial articles in the paper were written by him, and even those that were not so written, may be presumed to have been inspired by him. These editorial articles have not been included in the collected works of Mr. Mandalik, but they reveal remarkable insight of the writer into the principles of political science and show his breadth of vision in political matters.

His views on Forms of Government

Visvanath Narayan Mandalik studied deeply the political theories of the western philosophers and was convinced of the superiority of democracy over other forms of government. But he was not blind to the merits of the traditional Indian form of government. In a series of articles entitled *English and Native Rule in India* he compares the eastern with the western theories of government and discusses their comparative merits and defects. He calls the eastern theory patriarchal and the western democratic. He finds that the East has made no advance in the theory or practice of government since the days of Vikramaditya; while in the West there has been great progress in the conception of the duties and responsibilities of the Government. He thinks that one of the causes of stationary condition in the idea of government "is the every perfection to which the theory of patriarchal rule the only form of government which has shown itself in Asia could be and was carried. The King being the father and protector of his people, the Sirkar was to look after every public object, from the apprehending of a thief and the erection of Dharmashala to the repelling of an invasion and the construction of the grandest public work." But the

* He was re-nominated three times between 1874 and 1884. He was nominated to the Supreme Council in 1884 and re-nominated in 1886.

defect of such a system of government is that its success depends too much on the accident of birth. Unless there is a continual succession of able monarchs like Antonius, power would fall into the hands of unworthy rulers, who are sure to abuse it. So he comes to the conclusion that "the Asiatic Governments have, as a rule, been what despotism may be expected to be."

But Mandalik points out certain merits of the Asiatic system of government. First, the despot has been often checked by custom and usage. "There has thus been an accumulation of precedents and formalities which every tolerably good ruler is required by the Shashtra and the public opinion of the State to follow. These precedents of course occupy the place of usage and cannot claim the privileges of law. But in this lies the merit as well as the demerit of the native system of rule. The usage may be violated for evil as well as for good. It is set aside as well in summarily proscribing the vice of drinking or relieving popular distress as in disregarding the rules of strict justice, in remitting a revenue in times of difficulty as well as in imposing an additional impost in times of plenty." When the writer is extolling the virtue of usage over law, he is thinking of the proverbial red-tapism of Bureaucracy, which is altogether foreign to the traditions in India. When Indians make an appeal to the authorities they do not like to hear that this or that formality of law stands in the way of having their grievances redressed.

Mandalik further points out that the excess of despotism was curbed in this country by the existence of municipal self-government. The village system acted as a sheet anchor to the people during the storms of anarchy and disorder. Within the walls of their respective little domains, the village Panchayats used to settle all their affairs and to pay taxes to the ruling powers. Having admitted the services rendered by the system of village self-government, Mandalik shows its evil effect on national life. "We have no cause to be very thankful to this institution; for we believe it is that which, by affording a tolerable refuge to the subject's hearth and home, made him indifferent to the fate of his country. But

there can be no doubt that it actually counter-balanced the effects of prevailing despotism."

Besides these, there were other safeguards against despotism. The local officers could not find any opportunity of sheltering their oppressions or misdeeds behind any excuse under colour of obstructive laws or boards. Moreover, in case of official corruption appeal could be made to the King, who was easily accessible to all.⁴²

The merits of the traditional form of Indian government show, according to Mandalik, the defects of the Bureaucratic government. He explains these defects in another article in the following way: "In this state, the ryot is deprived of the advantage of the protection of the patriarchal order of things, without being able to overcome the disadvantage of his fresh position by representative means. The bureaucracy is too powerful for him, and its lower strata taking shelter under complex laws and legal formalities press on him at times with a heavy weight but through channels which secure it exemption from detection or penalty—a condition which is illustrated by the experience of Mofussil administration."⁴³

When Mandalik wrote this article, agitation had begun all over the country for the Indianisation of services. From the time of Raja Rammohun Roy down to the dawn of Independence, public men and political organisations have demanded the filling up of all cadres of service with Indians. But as early as 1867, Mr. Mandalik pointed out that even complete Indianisation of services would not secure for the country a good system of government. In an article entitled "Essentials of our political content," he writes: "Even if the whole country were overrun with native civilians, the necessity for the second essential of our political content will remain, *viz.* the creation or recognition of a popular counterpoise. Native officials would certainly appreciate the position and wants of the people better than Europeans and in all cases they will bring a feeling of sympathy to bear on their task. But as a class, they would be officials still. It is the same even in England. A popular check on them will always be required and one of England's best gifts to us would be an institution which would enable us peacefully to balance official bureaucracy with the full exercise of popular rights."⁴⁴ In

another article he shows that though the individual resource and energy of the officials are essential for good administration, there must exist a system of checks and counter-checks to utilise and direct their activities for good.⁴⁵

Mandalik was a staunch adherent of the representative system of government. He quoted with approval the views expressed in *Arunodaya* of Thana to the effect that as long as the system of election be not introduced in India, the interests of the ryots would not be guarded against and that the ryots would have a standing cause of complaint against the administration of the country.⁴⁶ Like other leaders of public opinion in India, Mandalik condemned the spirit of secrecy, in which the government was carried on here. He wrote: "Secrecy is a mere matter of expediency, and is not, we trust, to be regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of policy, beyond which statesmen are not to look in governing the destinies of the mighty Empire."⁴⁷ His chief reason for condemning Bureaucracy was its secretive spirit.

His views on Functions of Government

Mandalik holds that the primary function of Government is to maintain law and order indeed, but its higher object should be to improve the moral and material condition of the people. He opines that in order to discharge its primary function, government should administer justice freely without levying any duty of judicial stamps. He appeals to history and to the principles of economics and politics to show that the stamp duty is morally unjustifiable. He points out that in the Hindu period there was no tax on justice, and the most celebrated Moslem emperors went about dispensing justice—of a rough and ready sort—indeed, but without compelling suitors to pay stamp duties and institution fees. Then he brings out an argument from the armoury of political economy of Mill to prove that those who are under the necessity of going to law, are those who benefit least and so should not be made to pay for applying for redress of wrongs they have suffered. Moreover, one of the necessary functions of government is the security of person and property; and for the due preservation of this, the establishment of courts, civil and criminal, and the maintenance of an efficient Army and

Police is essential. He argues that administration of law is a necessity and not a luxury. "It is the only protection the weak and the oppressed have against the strong and the wicked. Law, like other human institutions, is no doubt at times perverted by the base for their own ends. But that is no reason that its already difficult approaches should be guarded by such heavy toll-bars as Mr. Hobhouse's bill proposes to create."⁴⁸

But preservation of peace and order and the free administration of justice alone should not satisfy the Government of any civilised country. He writes in another article that merely being allowed to labour in peace, to pay regular taxes and to be subject to a sharp bureaucratic rule are not all that can satisfy the "organic wants and inward yearnings of a nation—one too, that is not without glorious tradition in arms, in politics and in religion."⁴⁹ He made numerous appeals to Government to make it sensible of its moral duties and to assume functions which would make an all-round improvement in the condition of the people.

He was against all forms of Communism. He thought that the natural inequality of men cannot be remedied by the artificial distribution of wealth through the agency of the Government. The *Native Opinion* took special notice of a book, in which a crude form of communism was enunciated and in reviewing the book called the writer an Utopian idealist, whose ideas can never be translated into action. The writer of the book was Visnu Bawa Brahmachari, a Sannyasi with a considerable following. In criticising the scheme the *Native Opinion* characterised it as simply absurd.⁵⁰

His views on Nationality

Mr. Mandalik contrasts the western conception of Nationality with the eastern and finds that the latter is merely parochial in outlook. He writes: "A Hindu's patriotism has never been marked by that narrow yet fierce political passion which characterises some nations or tribes. It has rather shown itself in a fond attachment to the natal spot, an interest in the local affairs of the village and a sentimental attachment to the religion and the manners of his ancestors.

These principles indeed in a way constitute patriotism and exercise on the mind of the people an influence akin to it. But still they are not the same as that ardent love of a definite 'country' and 'nationality' which burns fiercely in the views of the European for instance, which would make him zealously guard (in however narrow a spirit) every national interest, and which would make him scorn the offer of any advantages in return for his national independence". He then tries to find out the causes of such indifference to the wider interests of the nation prevalent among Indians. He thinks that the "unworldly spirit of the Hindu institutions", the mildness of the Hindu character, and the cosmopolitan outlook of the Muslims are mainly responsible for such an attitude of mind. He opines that it was due to such an attitude that the British rule in India could be established. "It commenced in the east, in Bengal whose bankers and other leading men conspired with Clive to depose the tyrannical Sirajadowla; it culminated in western India, where the Deccan Sirdars played a similar part to be rid of the detested son of Raghunath Rao Peshwa."⁵¹

His views on the Sovereignty of Indian States

Mr. Mandalik championed the cause of the Indian states, which were then being annexed one by one to the British Empire. The question of succession to the throne was often decided by the British Indian Government. Mr. Mandalik showed that this interference of the British Indian Government is against the sovereignty of the Indian States. He quoted the great authority of Kent to show that the Indian States are really sovereign states. Kent says: "A weak power does not surrender its independence and right to self-government by associating with a stronger power and receiving its protection."⁵² Mr. Mandalik then comes to the conclusion that the sovereignty of Indian States might be qualified or unqualified; the authority of the Sovereign may extend over five miles or over fifty thousand miles; in the eye of law it is the same. "If the Principality is a sovereignty, the succession to its throne can only be regulated by its own internal law."⁵³

Mandalik on Taxation

Mandalik never joined the Congress. The Congress did not pass any resolution demanding the imposition of import duty on cotton goods during the first decade of its existence. Mandalik voiced the feeling of Indian nationalists when he pleaded in the Supreme Legislature on the 11th January, 1886 for the imposition of import duty on cotton goods at the low rate of $1\frac{1}{4}\%$. He argued that by taking this step the Government would get a revenue of Rs. 66 lakhs. If it fell on all classes of citizens, it would mean one-half of an anna per head of population, which numbered 25 crores at that time. But he contended that the burden of import duty would not fall on the poorer classes. He observed: "It is chiefly paid, as Mr. Sorabjee Bengalli has shown, by the higher classes. Besides, this is a tax which will reach the population of Native States, who receive the benefit of the British rule as we do, without contributing towards its expenses. This item of indirect taxation is a better way of raising revenues for Imperial purposes than direct taxation, which, in India particularly, is obnoxious to the people. In the fact of these facts I am sorry this tax was not availed of as recommended by the Madras Chamber of Commerce." Mandalik was forceful as a speaker and convincing as a writer. It is worth investigating why he did not join the Congress. His failing health compelled him to resign from the membership of the Supreme Legislature in 1887.

IX. Raja Sir Dinkar Rao (1819-1896)

Dinkar Rao was one of the few Maratha statesmen of the nineteenth century. He did not know English till the fortieth year of his life; but that could not deter him from taking an active part in the public life of India. His family became impoverished at the time of abdication of Baji Rao II and he had little opportunity for receiving education. His family shifted from Satara to Gwalior in 1827 and it was during the next seven years that he picked up a little knowledge of Marathi, Persian and Arithmetic. He entered the service of Maharaj Scindia at the early age of sixteen. At the comparatively early age of thirty-three he rose to the position

of the Dewan of Gwalior in 1852 by dint of sheer merit. He introduced salutary reforms in the revenue administration, stopped the pernicious system of farming the revenue and prepared an excellent Revenue Code for the guidance of Revenue officers. He reformed the Judicial department and the Police Service. It was due to his influence that the people and forces of Gwalior were restrained from joining the Mutiny. But his enemies poisoned the ears of the Scindia against him so much that the latter retired to a place sixty miles off from his capital and said: "Either Dinkar Rao or I would rule in Gwalior". Dinkar Rao tendered his resignation in January 1859 and settled at Allahabad. Sir John Kaye wrote about him in his *Sepoy Revolt* that at the most critical period of his life, Maharaja Jayaji Rao had the good fortune of having Dinkar Rao at his elbow. He further observed: "That great native statesman (Dinkar Rao), who had shared with Salar Jang of Hyderabad, the glory of being the Abul Fazl of the nineteenth century, and from whom the best of our English administrators have learnt many lessons in wisdom, exercised a benign influence not only over the Government of the Gwalior territory which he reformed and consolidated, but over the personal character of Maharaja Scindhia himself." Subsequently he served the states of Dholepore, Rewa and Baroda. In 1862 Dinkar Rao, along with the Maharaja of Patiala and Maharaja Deo Narayan Singh of Benares, was nominated additional member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council. In the same year he prepared the 'Memorandum of Observations on the Administration of India' for the perusal of the Viceroy. It covered as many as forty-six topics. In conclusion he wrote: "No one should think that I am partial, because I advocate the cause of the people only. The effects of having a contented population are always good. It is proper, therefore, for legislators to bear in mind the principle of improving the relations and increasing affection between the governors and the governed. Contented subjects are indispensably required for the general maintenance of peace; they are the cause of economy in military expenditure, and of general stability of government. To every Government the foundations of security are twofold: first, the strength of the army; second, the contentment of the subjects. Both these are essential. As the Almighty has given

the kingdom of Hindustan to the English, so they ought to take into consideration the wishes of the Indian people."⁵⁴ He did not support the policy of disarming all the people, irrespective of their position, character and the services rendered by them. He disliked the tendency of making an income from the sale of judicial stamps required for civil suits. He was a warm admirer of the Village Panchayats.

In the Supreme Legislative Council he did not play the part of a dumb supporter of the proposals put forward by the Government. He opposed the infliction of corporal punishment for all offences, as was proposed by the Government. He said on February 26, 1862 that flogging should be confined to only such cases of theft as were committed after the first conviction. Even in such cases the Court should, first of all, enquire whether the offender looked to theft and imprisonment as a means of supporting himself. He reminded the Council that flogging had been abolished by Regulation II of 1834 but was later on reintroduced by Act III of 1844. He further observed: "If crime increased since flogging had been abolished, let the punishment be restored. But if it were introduced on the supposition that additional punishments would deter men from crime, he might refer, in proof to the contrary, to the condition of *Native States*, and especially Nepal, where although adultery and theft were punished with instant death, and slight crimes were visited with severe corporal punishment, crimes remained unchecked and these very offences were still committed." He did not, therefore, think it advisable that flogging should be added to imprisonment.⁵⁵

He protested against the levy of municipal rates in Rangoon. He reminded the Government that besides the payment of Rs. 2.50 per house on an average, the people had to pay the Income tax, Stamp Duty, Customs Duty etc. When Mr. Forbes pointed out that the Bill merely extended to the towns in Burma the laws which were in force in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, he kept quiet.⁵⁶

Dinkar Rao was loyal to the British Government indeed, but he could not forget that foreign domination could never

be an unmixed blessing. In a letter addressed to an eminent Englishman he wrote in December, 1865: "You say that the attention of the great statesmen in England is directed towards the real improvement of India; but you should bear in mind that it is but of little use to repair the upper storey of a building, the foundation of which has been damaged."⁵⁷ This reveals the strength of his patriotic sentiment.

CHAPTER XI

RAJA SIR T. MADHAV RAO, A CONSERVATIVE STATESMAN OF SOUTHERN INDIA

(1828-91)

T. Madhav Rao was a Mahratta Brahmana but his ancestors had settled in Southern India in the eighteenth century and he himself spent the major part of his life in Madras. He was born at Kumbhakonam. His father, Bang Rao, his uncle Krishna Rao and he himself adorned the post of Dewan of Travancore. Raja Ram Varma of Travancore wrote : "What Pericles did for Athens and what Cromwell did for England—that Sir Madhav Rao did for Travancore". He was one of the most brilliant products of Madras High School, which was called the University of Madras in the forties of the last century. He had the privilege of being taught by that gifted teacher E. B. Powell, who stated that Madhav Rao could have secured an honourable position even in the University of Cambridge for his proficiency in Physics and Mathematics. He began his career as an officiating Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at the early age of nineteen. In 1849 he joined the Accountant-General's office at Madras but he resigned his post after two years when he was appointed the Guardian tutor of the princes of Travancore. He impressed the British Resident of Travancore so much by his learning and culture that the latter wrote that "he had never met with a native of India who had obtained so thorough a mastery over the English language and so full an appreciation of English views in regard to Politics and Political Economy."¹ It is no wonder that such a gifted person became Dewan of Travancore at the early age of thirty.

During the period of his Dewanship he converted the den of misrule, as Travancore was in 1857, into a model state. He introduced fiscal reforms with such success that Fawcett

hailed him as "the Turgot of India". He abolished monopolies, reformed and reorganised the Police and the Judiciary and doubled the expenditure on public education. He did away with the vexatious taxes yielding little revenue and introduced the Income tax. He encouraged the cultivation of tea and coffee.

T. Madhav Rao was a staunch upholder of the principle of social equality. Soon after his assumption of the post of Dewan he found that the women of the Shanars or toddy-drawers were being prosecuted by the upper caste people because they had the courage to defy the age-long custom of keeping the upper part of their body bare. They incurred the wrath of the Brahmanas for covering their breasts. While the Protestant Missionaries told them that the Queen's Proclamation entitled them to disregard degrading customs, the orthodox Hindu high castes contended that the Proclamation guaranteed British non-interference in matters religious under any and every circumstance. At some places turbulent affrays took place and a detachment of the Nair Brigade had to be despatched. Madhav Rao found that the Maharaja and the British Resident were opposed to the Shanars but he tactfully brought round the Maharaja to his views and granted the Shanar women the liberty to dress as they liked. The Resident was recalled by the Government.

After fifteen years of service (1857-72) as Dewan, Raja Madhav Rao retired from the Travancore service at the age of forty-five on a pension of Rupees one thousand per month. In 1873 he was appointed the Dewan of Indore and in 1875 that of Baroda. When Muhar Rao Gaekwad was deposed on a charge of attempting to poison the Resident of Baroda, Lord Northbrook found that people would resent the appointment of a British officer as Dewan. At this critical juncture he decided to offer the post to the seasoned statesman, T. Madhav Rao. The new ruler, Siyaji Rao III who had been adopted from a poor collateral branch of the ruling family was a minor. Besides providing a sound administration of the State, Madhav Rao undertook to make Siyaji Rao III an ideal prince. He wrote a book called *Minor Hints* for his edification. This work consists of 46 short chapters and covers 367 pages. In imitation of Machiavelli's famous work, it has been called

"The Prince or the Law of Dependent Monarchies."² The veteran statesman elucidates here the principles of good government, which the minor ruler was to follow when he would take up the reins of administration in 1882.

As a conservative thinker Madhav Rao was an admirer of the British Government in India. He did not show any sympathy with those who tried to put an end to the British rule in 1857. He considered such an attempt as foolhardy and reactionary. He impressed upon the mind of the young prince the necessity of conciliating the British authorities because they possessed irresistible power. He advised him to do so in a cheerful mood and not in a grudging fashion. According to him, the British Government possessed the noble qualities of reason, justice, morality and moderation. It was, moreover, open to reasoning. He wished the perpetuation of the British rule, because he was convinced that it would promote the happiness of the people. Madhav Rao's arguments were purely secular in character. He did not bring in God in this matter, as others regarded the British domination as a divine dispensation.

But this does not imply that he was an agnostic or rationalist. In his instructions to the minor prince he wrote that the ruler "is responsible to God, and to his own conscience". Here he was combining the principles of government enunciated in the Santiparvam of the *Mahabharata* with the modern democratic theory. He emphasised the need of promoting the welfare of the people. He said that the ruler was the trustee of the state power as well as of public funds. He must be prepared to sacrifice his personal interest for the sake of his people. He enunciated once again the paternal theory of government. The ruler was to consider the people as his children, for whose interests he must work hard. He advised him to consider the Raj as his private estate. He asked him to bring about a happy reconciliation between the interests of the people and his own interests.

One of the cardinal principles of public administration in a monarchical state is thus enunciated by him : "Sovereign power is solely entrusted to him for the safety of the State and the happiness of the people." The ruler must supervise, control, admonish and finally decide on all important matters.

His ideal was to accord equal treatment to all sections of people, irrespective of their caste and creed. The burden of taxation must be shared equally by all. Justice must be impartially administered. Appointment to public offices must go by no other criterion than merit.

He laid down the following essential requisites for good government : (1) good, efficient, adequate, uncorrupt and disciplined police ; (2) sufficient military force to support the police in case of necessity; (3) proper machinery for administration of justice which would decide cases promptly, without undue delay and without any partiality at all ; (4) good, uncorrupt, efficient and impartial public servants, who must be well paid and to whom security of tenure should be guaranteed; (5) laws should be based on custom but when some new laws were to be adopted the ruler should consult judges, ministers and principal members of all the communities. He should be guided by the opinion of the majority. Thus Madhav Rao was introducing democratic features in the traditional type of government.

He held up the ideal of religious neutrality for the Government. Laws must not entrench upon the domain of religion. The Government should allow every individual to practise whatever religion he liked, provided he did not thereby injure others or violate the rights of others. The influence of Mill and Spencer is noticeable in his writing. He says that the Government should not unnecessarily curtail the personal liberty of the individual, who should be left free to make himself happy according to his own light and inclination ; but he must not be allowed to injure others in any case. The Government should abstain from such undertakings as would be performed by the people themselves.

Laws should be promulgated clearly and in due form. The Prince, his ministers and high officials should be as much bound to obey these as ordinary citizens.

As regards public expenditure, Madhav Rao states that the ruler should, in no case, spend more than ten per cent of public revenue on the requirements of the royal family and the palace. Ninety per cent of the income of the State should

be spent in satisfying the needs of the people. The state should take the responsibility of imparting proper type of education to the citizens. It should teach general and universal morality and encourage higher education. But it should not insist on imparting special religious instruction.

He advised the ruler not to indulge in any national or international politics. National politics would destroy the state as completely as international politics would lead to the annexation by the paramount power. The ruler should never forget that he was purely a subordinate feudal lord. Siyaji Rao III followed many of the instructions of the sagacious and extremely cautious statesman indeed, but he was too spirited a ruler to adhere to his subordinate role.

Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao placed great reliance on the wisdom, justice and benevolence of the British authorities.³ But in reply to a lecture delivered by Sir Lepel Griffin on the advantages of the British rule he stated as many as 76 reasons for considering the rule of Indian states superior to the foreign government. A few of these points are:—(1) The revenues are mostly spent in the country itself; (6) Men capable of rendering service are not compulsorily retired at the age of fifty-five; (10) On occasions of distress or difficulty advances are given to the Ryots more sympathetically or more liberally; (18) the *sowcar* is not allowed to be so inordinately exacting; (21) grievances are redressed quickly. It is easy to secure a personal interview. No stamp duty has got to be paid for petitioning; (57) Indigenous manufactures are encouraged more liberally; (74) It is an undoubted fact that the people of Native States are extremely averse to go under British rule and would make many sacrifices to continue under native rule, and this fact carries its own implication; (76) It would be a sad day for India if the Native States disappear and all Indians be levelled under the iron pressure of British rule—an effort which Gibbon deplored in the case of the Roman Empire.⁴

He remained silent over the autocracy of the rulers and also on the suppression of civil liberty in the Indian states. This is because he had no sympathy for representative government. "The great experience of Europe has shown", he wrote, "that representative government contains much good

and much evil. In introducing it into India, therefore, responsible British statesmen have to exercise great care and caution, that the good is produced and that the evil is excluded. In these circumstances it might be wrong to introduce that system into India at once, merely because the Congress asks for it. It is absolutely necessary to take measures gradually and tentatively." He resigned from the Standing Committee of the Congress in Madras because he could not approve of the scheme of representative government as drawn by Eardley Norton and other members of the Committee.⁵ While many members of the Congress considered Cross's Council Bill as unsatisfactory, Raja T. Madhav Rao welcomed it as an important concession. In a letter to the *Madras Mail* he wrote that he did not attach much weight to the withholding of popular election because careful observation and experience had convinced him that popular election would ensure the failure of extended councils, whereas a system of nomination would probably ensure their success.⁶

Like Raja Dinkar Rao, Madhav Rao raised his voice for making punishment for crimes more humane and reasonable. A widow having given birth to a child put it to death to save herself from ignominy. She was sentenced to death. Madhav Rao argued that in such cases one should not be awarded capital punishment. He wrote, "The great and probably the sole justification of human punishment is the necessity of checking, and if possible, preventing offences. Punishment, therefore, must be limited to the requirement of the necessity. If punishment goes beyond this necessity, the excess can have no justification."⁷ He held imprisonment for a term of seven years sufficient in such cases. As death sentence in cases of forgery, perjury and counterfeiting coins had been abolished, he hoped that it would be done away with in the case of infanticide too.

The Hindu society in Bombay was convulsed by a case of Restitution of conjugal rights in 1886. Rukhmabai, the only daughter of a wealthy person was married at the age of eleven to Dadaji who was eighteen or nineteen years of age. She was educated by her father. When her father died, her husband, who was ill-educated, addicted to narcotic drugs and possibly consumptive asked her to come and live with him. Rukhmabai

refused to recognise the marriage as valid because she had been married when a minor. Dadaji filed a case for the restitution of conjugal rights,⁸ and got decree. Rukhmabai made in appeal* Principal Wordsworth of Elphinstone College, a grandson of the great poet and Ranade took the initiative in raising funds for her defence. The conservative Hindus thought that if Rukhmabai were not compelled to live with her husband, the marriage tie amongst the Hindus would become loose. They, therefore, raised large amounts in support of Dadaji. Rukhmabai said that she would rather suffer imprisonment for six months than live with one whom she could not regard as her husband. There arose an agitation for a change in the law for abolition of imprisonment as provided by section 260 of the Code of Civil Procedure 1882. Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao wrote a lengthy Memorandum with reference to the Government Note No. 1427 Judicial, dated 4th July, 1887 on the Law of Restitution of Conjugal rights and this was published in the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha in 1887. He wrote that it was customary to hand over the recalcitrant wife to the husband but in 1882 imprisonment was substituted for it without the knowledge and consent of the people. He was against the proposal of abolishing both the ancient custom and its modern substitute, the imprisonment because he feared that it would amount to the abolition of the political sanction of marriage. In support of his argument he quoted the following observation of Jeremy Bentham: "In transplanting a law from one country to another the same law verbally, is not the same law really, when the sensibility of the two people is essentially different. A certain law in Europe produces the happiness of families; transplanted into Asia, it would become the scourge of society." He adduced following reasons for the non-intervention of Government in social matters. "The interests of peace and

* Rukhmabai wrote from Bombay on the 18th March, 1887 to Pandita Ramabai a pathetic letter in chaste English in course of which she said: "They have not only commanded me to go to live with the man, but also have obliged me to pay the costs of the dispute.... My dear friend, I shall have been cast into the State prison when this letter reaches you; this is because I do not, and can not, obey the order of Mr. Justice Farran." (Pandita Ramabai: *The High Caste Hindu Women*, 1887, p. 90).

order require that Government should not interfere in this matter unless at the request of the people themselves, who know their social institutions infinitely better than an alien Government can know." According to him marriages are prescribed by customs and becomes effective by the combined action of religious, social and political influences. "The least wish on the part of the government to weaken these influences is only likely to be misunderstood and to cause discontent on the part of the people. Even the suspicion of such a wish must alarm the people. In these circumstances I deem it my duty both to the Government and to the people to earnestly recommend the postponement of the measures under reference to a future and more advanced generation as the postponement by the English people of the question of marriage with the deceased wife's sister. The philosopher may be impatient of the delay that necessitated but not the practical administrator."

He was, however, liberal enough to recommend one of the following measures: (1) admonishing the woman personally in the court; (2) giving her time to cool, to think and to consult; (3) attaching her property to pay fine; (4) making her over to husband and (5) simple imprisonment for a day or for several days, each day being reckoned from sunrise to sunset, so that the woman might not be under detention during the night. He did not like to do away with imprisonment altogether, because it would weaken the hands of the judge. He added, "It would be very regrettable indeed if the vast Hindu population of India would come to think that Government desires to weaken the marriage tie, so as to put it in the power of any woman with little or no property to break it—to break it at any time or stage of her marriage life and under whatever system she had been married, minor or adult, consensual or non-consensual, whether the marriage has been consummated or otherwise, whether the woman has borne children or not. Under such an impression, it may be feared that it will become difficult to maintain peace and order."

He was not prepared to consider the willingness or otherwise of the woman concerned. He held that as women are dependent on men for their livelihood, it behove them to be obedient to the male persons. He pointed out that such

obedience was especially necessary "at a time when manufacturing industries are gone, food is leaving the country in enormous quantities and the means of subsistence are being extra-ordinarily pressed upon." These words show that he was not oblivious of the defects of the British rule and that he feared that those women who would rebel against their husband might not get the subsistence for maintaining their very existence. In conclusion he wrote : "Hindu marriages are connected with religion. Any interference with such marriages amounts to an interference with religion. The Hindus strongly dislike interference with their religion, law and customs. The measures under reference will be disliked. The Queen's Proclamation will be insisted upon. There is no necessity for the proposed legislation. Rukhmabai's case is no justification."*

In his note on Divorce he said that divorces could not be altogether refused but they must be very sparingly granted. He added : " The divorce should be granted conformity with Hindu law or with the customary laws of the caste concerned. A divorce by mutual consent may be preferable. Divorces should be difficult especially where monogamous marriages are concerned. As for details, in regard to children, property etc., the long established caste custom will be the best guide, because they must be the outcome of very long experience. Any modification of these customs must be limited to the imperative demands of general equity. The opinion of a Panchayat will be useful to the Judge and will serve as a buffer between the Court and the people."

With a view to making his position clear as regards the role of Government in social reforms, he wrote : "I don't deny the necessity of social reform in the Hindu community. I also recognise the fact that the legislature will have to lend its aid in carrying out social reform, but I think that social reform should be initiated by the community which is most concerned and which is also best informed. I further think that the legislature should as heretofore abstain from all

* It may be mentioned in this connection that Rukhmabai never agreed to recognise her husband. She went to England, became trained as a physician, came back to India, practised Medicine and lived till 1955.

interference until its aid is asked for by a respectable number of respectable Hindus."⁹

Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao was the connecting link between Southern India and Western India, between the old generation and the new and between the Princely States and British India. He was a conservative thinker. As Chairman of the Reception Committee of the third session of the Congress, held in Madras in 1887 he uttered a note of warning against youthful impetuosity. The Congress was submitting memorials and petitions on various topics to the Government. He considered it necessary to explain to the political authorities that the Congress had no desire to criticise the Government. He said : "By the rulers it must be taken for granted, that when subjects petition and expostulate, it is not in a spirit of disputation or cavilling, much less of disaffection and disloyalty but only to enlighten those holding sway over them, and, in a peaceful and constitutional manner to have their wishes understood and their grievances made known."¹⁰

This was in consonance with the teachings he had inculcated to the Gaekwad Siyaji Rao III. The fundamental postulates of his treatise, the *Minor Hints* were that the British must be considered as the paramount power in India, that hereditary monarchy is the best form of Government for the Princely States of India, that the people can have no fundamental rights of citizenship. But at the same time he impressed upon the minor prince the fact that the ruler is "responsible to God and to his own conscience. He is responsible to the people. He is responsible to the British Government. He is responsible to enlightened public opinion in general." This responsibility, however, was merely moral not legal, nor institutional.

CHAPTER XII

BHARATENDU HARISHCHANDRA (1850—1885)

Political consciousness of the Hindi-speaking people was roused first by Bharatendu Harishchandra, whose centre of literary activity was Benares. Grierson acclaimed Harishchandra as the most famous poet in Hindi literature of his time. He is one of the creators of modern Hindi drama and prose. By a curious coincidence he was born in the same year as V.K. Chiplunkar (1850-1882), who is universally recognised as the 'Shivaji of the modern Marathi language and literature'. While Keats died at the age of twenty-six, Shelley at thirty and Chiplunkar at thirty-two, Bharatendu Harishchandra lived in this world for thirty-four years and four months. Between 1868 and 1884 he wrote as many as eighteen dramas, twenty-eight books containing poems, twenty works on devotion and Vaisnavism, and thirteen pamphlets essays on history and antiquity besides a number of articles on diverse other subjects. His father Gopalchandra, alias Giridhar Das of Benares had a short span of life for twenty-seven years and yet he is credited with the production of forty works. Harishchandra studied for some years in the Queen's College, Benares. He had a special knack for learning languages. He acquired a working knowledge of Sanskrit, Bengali, Marathi, Gujrati, Marwari and Punjabi language and literature.

His attitude towards the British Government might be compared with that of Lokhitawadi of Maharashtra and of Bankimchandra Chatterjee and Hemchandra Banerjee of Bengal. All of them were eloquent in their expression of loyalty, but at the same time they subtly but effectively prepared their countrymen for shouldering the responsibility of carrying on the government of the country in future. Like

Hemchandra Banerjee, Harishchandra wrote poems on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1875, and the departure of Ripon in 1884. Like Hemchandra again he wrote *Bharata-Bhiksha* and *Bharata-Janani*. He even went a step further in his demonstration of loyalty. He translated into Hindi the British National Anthem and wrote a poem when he heard of the illness of Prince of Wales in 1871. In 1877 he composed *Mano-mukula-mala* and a hymn in Sanskrit in praise of Queen Victoria on the occasion of her assumption of the title of Empress of India. In his *Ripon-astaka*, he stated that administrators like Clive, Hastings and Lytton could never evoke that feeling of devotion which the Indian people expressed spontaneously towards Ripon.

But he was not a blind admirer of the British rule. In his *Badshah Darpan* he compared the Moslem rule to Cholera and the British rule to Tuberculosis. The Moslems quickly used to put to death a number of Indians, made forcible conversion and forcibly married Hindu women, but they made India their home. The country, therefore, was not denuded of wealth. Moreover, the people were not disarmed and whenever any ruler committed excesses he had to meet armed opposition. The British, on the other hand, weakened the country by disarmament and export of wealth. With a mild sarcasm he said that though they had taken away much of our wealth by various devices, yet they taught us how to beg for our subsistence.¹

Harishchandra was by heritage and conviction a devout Vaisnava. Having been born in the Agarwal community he was a strict vegetarian. He, therefore, denounced the sacrifice of animals in the name of religion. He wrote a drama *Vaidiki Himsa Himsa na Bhabati* in 1873 in which he sent the King, his chaplain and minister to hell for taking meat and wine. There might be an indirect hint to the British rulers in this. Chitrugupta, the counsellor of Yamaraj, the god of death, said that under the English Government those who showed liberality according to western standard were rewarded with titles.² Then again he complained that the minister had no hesitation in supporting the imposition of taxes on the subjects, but he did not take a single step to promote their happiness.³ The minister was so much accustomed to bribery

that he tried to evade punishment after death by offering bribe to Yama.⁴ All these might or might not have been a reflection on the British administration in India, but these reveal his high ideal about government.

The same dramatic work shows that he entertained the most liberal ideas about social reform. In support of widow-remarriage, he quotes the verse of Parasara which was made familiar by Vidyasagar. But the priest pointed out that the same authority speaks of higher merit to be acquired by a widow who maintains Brahmacharya. Then the dramatist ridicules the authors of Dharmashastras like Atri and Devala who prescribe that a woman can not be impure by her connection with a lover, that woman's face is always pure and that the impurity due to adultery gets washed after menstruation.⁵ But the general trend of his thought was in favour of social reform. He accepted the interpretation of the Shastras put forward by the liberal school and held widow-remarriage and travel abroad as justifiable. He opposed early marriage and polygamy.⁶ He advocated the cause of education of women and arranged for the training of his daughter, Vidyavati Devi. He wanted women to be self-reliant in defending their honour and position. In his novel *Neeldevi* he has shown how this Rajput heroine gave up the traditional method of saving her honour by committing suicide. Her husband had been killed by a Moslem invader. She posed herself as a public woman, gained his confidence, and murdered him to avenge the death of her husband.

Harishchandra composed a satirical poem under the caption *Angrej-stotra*, hymn in praise of the English, in 1872. In it he described the Army and the Police as the two arms, bureaucracy as the claws, darkness of secrecy as the back and import as the heart of the English. He further compared the treasury to the stomach and greed to the hunger of the ruling race.⁷ In February 1874 he made a fervent appeal to his countrymen to industrialise the country, so that we might meet our requirements without importing goods from England. Some people here were so much fascinated with British workmanship that they imported even doors and windows from abroad. This meant the loss of livelihood of Indian artisans. Harishchandra exhorted the Indian merchants and

industrialists to make united efforts and asked the consumers to be satisfied with the products of our own country, though these were somewhat inferior in quality to foreign commodities.⁸ On the 23rd March, 1874 Harishchandra drafted a pledge for the use of *Swadeshi* goods and published it in his journal, *Kavi-vachan-sudha*. People were asked to take the vow, in the name of all-seeing, omnipresent, eternal and true God, not to use foreign cloth from the very day of taking the pledge, and to purchase only the cloth made in India. Those who would subscribe to this oath were to send their name to Babu Harishchandra.⁹ This is a remarkable document in the history of the *Swadeshi* movement in India. It anticipated the *Swadeshi* agitation of Bengal more than three decades earlier. Harishchandra, however, was tolerant enough to allow the use of those foreign cloths which had already been purchased. He did not think of making a bonfire of the foreign cloth. But probably this lack of spectacular demonstration was the cause of failure of the movement started by him.

In the background of the strong *Swadeshi* sentiment expressed by Harishchandra, it is likely that his popular farcical composition, *Andher Nagari* written in 1881 was a veiled satire on the British administration in India. The theme was not an original one, though there was some novelty in its presentation. Harishchandra appears to have borrowed the story from Swami Dayananda, with whose works and tenets he was familiar. Dayananda relates how a constitutional ruler named Dharmapal was succeeded by his son Gobargand, who drove away all the best councillors of his father and declared that his own will must henceforward be regarded as law. The capital of the country was known as *Prakasavati* at the time of his father but he renamed it as *Andher* or *Darkness*. In his mad efforts to introduce innovations he declared that all the goods, from musk to dust must be sold at one rupee per seer in his kingdom. A *Sadhu* (ascetic) and his disciple were tempted by the low price of costly articles to make their abode at *Andher*. One dark night a man was robbed on the highway. The police could not arrest the culprit but they caught hold of an innocent person and brought him before the king. The king, without trying to

ascertain the guilt or innocence of the accused sentenced him to death, because as he enforced one uniform price for all sorts of goods, so did he prescribe one uniform punishment for all kinds of crimes. The officer-in-charge of execution reported to the King that the convict was lean and thin, while the sharp spike was a thick one. The king ordered: "Find out a fat man suitable for the instrument and place him on it," The officer found the Sadhu to be the fattest man and arrested him. The ascetic pleaded his innocence in vain. At last he whispered to his disciple to quarrel with him at the execution ground for favour of being put on the spike. The disciple, accordingly wrangled with his preceptor for having the privilege of being executed. The king heard of this strange quarrel and came to enquire about the matter. He insisted on knowing the cause of the quarrel and with a great show of reluctance the Sadhu told him that the day being an exceptionally auspicious one he who would die on the spike that day would enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. On hearing this the king pushed aside both the master and the disciple and himself mounted on the instrument.¹⁰

Harishchandra made considerable changes in the story. He did not make any reference to the rule of the father of the King. The crime which started the chain of events was not theft, but death of a goat by the fall of a wall. The Sadhu, in the version of the story of Harishchandra, refused to live in a city where people were foolish enough to sell precious articles at the same rate as ordinary ones. But his disciple felt tempted to stay there and he was the fat man who was ultimately arrested for being hanged, because the noose was just suited to his neck. The Sadhu rescued the disciple by his clever advice. In every respect Harishchandra imparted dramatic grace to the story. His King is an utter fool. He had such an imperfect knowledge of the language of the people that he confused Pan (betel) with Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana. He did not know the meaning of the term wall, and therefore held it responsible for the death of the goat and asked the owner of the goat to capture and bring it before him.¹¹ When he was told that it can not be brought, he asked the brother, son, friends and relatives to be produced before him. The audience had no difficulty in identifying the King

with the foreign rulers and judges who had little knowledge of the law and custom of the people. Two years after the composition of the drama a Judge actually compelled the *Shalagrama Shila* to be produced before the court. Surendranath Banerjea wrote an editorial in the *Bengali* protesting against this. He was held guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to imprisonment for two months in May 1883. Harishchandra was clever enough to expose the defects of British rule without making it palpable to the authorities.

In the regulation prescribing the same price for all sorts of articles there was probably a fling at the false doctrine of equality. In the fifth scene the constable said that no one dared to grow fat out of fear for the justice of the king and that the good and saintly persons were the special targets for punishment by the rulers. The dramatist ridiculed the craze of the society for money. Nothing but *pecuniary* consideration dictated the Brahmanas to elevate or degrade the castes of the people.

The most outspoken of all his patriotic dramas was the *Bharata-durdasha*, published in 1880. Its political import is hinted at the very beginning where Krishna is invoked to appear as the Kalki incarnation, with a sharp sword in his hand to put an end to the conduct of the Mlechchhas, which term may be explained as the un-Aryan ways of life. The drama opens with the song of a saintly person who says that it is impossible to bear the sight of the wretchedness of India. The song recounts the glories of ancient India, and bewails the loss of wealth and learning and prevalence of internal quarrels, slothfulness and evil tendencies amongst the people. Bharata says that there is none to help her. God lives in the far off heaven and the queen-empress beyond the seven seas. The misery of India is represented as a person called Bharat-durdasha, who threatens to send epidemics, raise prices of foodstuff and impose taxes on all classes of people. He further states that the few persons who have received English education would be punished for disloyalty because they went to reform the country. Titles, rewards and promotion should be reserved for those who are friendly to Bharat-durdasha. The factors which are held responsible for the decadence of India are too much insistence on untouchability, religious

and communal discord, belief in astrology, infant marriage, polygamy amongst Kulins, prohibition of widow remarriage and going abroad, and superstitions.¹² Satyanash, the agent of Bharat-durdasha reports that the Hindus are satisfied with mere subsistence and they do not take any interest in the welfare of the country. They have no energy, perseverance and divine discontent. Nepotism, extravagance, fondness for litigation and fashion are rampant in society and are ruining the people.

The fifth act of the drama represents a meeting held in a library for devising means to save the country from misery. The Bengali speaker refers to the activities of the British Indian Association and requests the audience to make agitation, because the British Government is afraid only of popular agitation and nothing else. He, therefore, asks the people to unite and carry on propaganda. One member asks whether his name would be removed from the Darbar of the Government for his joining this meeting. This is an attack on the repressive policy pursued by the Government. The Editor of a newspaper suggests that the best way of getting rid of Bharat-durdasha is to make weapons of newspapers and to fire shots of speeches. This is a fling at the type of political work carried on by the English-educated classes. A Marathi gentleman suggests the setting up of Sarvajanic Sabha (like the one at Poona), to arrange for the manufacture of cloth in India and to use nothing but Indian cloth. A citizen of North-western Provinces states that the first thing on which we should concentrate our attention is to forge unity amongst the people, educate the people, and to industrialise the country, other things will follow automatically. At this stage a Police Officer comes to arrest all those who have taken a leading part in the meeting. The President asks him under what law will he arrest them and the officer replies that under the Act called English Policy and under the section named the Wish of the Magistrate. Harishchandra here is much more outspoken than Bankimchandra.

In December, 1877 an opera called *Bharat-Janani* was published in the *Harishchandra Patrika*. Harishchandra forcefully describes the grief of Bharatmata in this work. She asks her sons to awaken, and consider seriously how to

remove the wretched condition of their mother country. She mourns the loss of wealth, ornaments, clothes, all of which have been forcibly looted away by robbers. She has become so poor that she cannot find even a little oil for dressing up her hair.¹³ Some Indians make a piteous appeal to Queen Victoria for rescuing them from this wretched condition. But all on a sudden an Englishman appears on the scene and prohibits them from making such an appeal. He regrets that the English have committed a blunder in educating the people.¹⁴ Another Englishman, however, rebukes him and assures the Indians that justice would be done to them.

Like Bankimchandra, Harishchandra did not have much faith in the agitation carried on by a few educated people. He deplored the use of English in political meetings and made an appeal to the leaders to use Hindi so that the people might understand them. In his essay on "How can India be reformed" he said that one should not depend on foreign goods and foreign language.¹⁵ He laid stress on the revival of folk songs, so that direct appeal may be made to the masses through these. He was one of the earliest champions of mass contact in India.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MOSLEM SCHOOL OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

I. Apathy of the Moslems to English Education

With the diffusion of English education the cleavage between the Hindus and Moslems became wider. While many of the Hindu young men came forward to avail themselves of all the opportunities for acquiring proficiency in English language and literature and Western culture, the Moslems looked down upon these with contempt. The seventh Annual Report of the College of Hadji Mohammad Mohsin, Hooghly shows that out of 572 students on the rolls of the college Department on the 1st May 1843, only 18 were Moslems and 542 were Hindus.¹ The Memorandum* submitted by the National Muhammadan Association on the 6th February, 1882 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal contended that the impoverishment and decadence of the Moslem community were not "the results of Muhammadan apathy, or of any unwillingness on their part to study the language of an alien race. At any rate, whatever may have been the causes in former times, there is not the smallest doubt that within the last quarter of a century strong desire has grown up among the Mussalmans for the study of the English language and literature. Their backwardness is due to their general poverty."² This argument can not stand the scrutiny of facts. In the Hadji Mohsin College as many as 260 students out of 572 enjoyed freestudentship, and all the Moslem students were exempted from making any payment of fees.³ Besides these they were entitled to get a number of senior scholarships of Rs. 50 per month and junior scholarships of

* This Memorandum is printed in Appendix IV of the present book.

Rs. 20 and Rs. 15 per month. The Committee of Public Instruction, Bengal, acting under the direction of the Governor-General set up an English class in the Calcutta Madrasa, in 1826. During the first quarter of a century of its existence it produced only two students, namely, Abdul Luteef and Wuheedoon Nubbee who were able to pass the Junior Scholarship examination.⁴ During the years 1826-1851 the Mohsin College, Hooghly also produced two Junior scholarship-holders, Moosa Ali and Waris Ali. The Government, therefore, decided to close the English classes in the Calcutta Madrasa.

The statistics of the number of Moslem candidates who appeared at the Entrance, First Arts and B. A. examinations in 1870-71 and of those who came out successful do not support the contention of the National Muhammeden Association that the Moslems became enthusiastic for English education between 1857 and 1882. The University of Calcutta had in those days jurisdiction over Bengal, Behar, Orissa, Assam (all included within the Province of Bengal), and also over the north-west Provinces, Oudh, Punjab, Central Provinces and Burma. The Report of the Syndicate of the Calcutta University for the year 1870-71 reveals the following interesting figures with regard to each of these Provinces:

Entrance Examination

Bengal

Religion	No. of candidates	No. passed
Hindus	1823	728
Moslems	73	39
Christians	67	43
Others	103	56
Total 2066		866

North West Provinces

Hindus	128	80
Moslems	21	15
Christians	24	17
Others	2	2
Total 175		114

Oudh

Religion	No. of candidates	No. passed
Hindus	37	24
Moslems	5	3
Christians	8	6
Others	3	3
<hr/> Total 53		<hr/> 36

Punjab

Hindus	58	40
Moslems	9	5
Christians	6	5
Others	1	nil
<hr/> Total 74		<hr/> 50

C. P.

Hindus	19	16
Moslems	2	2
Christians	5	3
<hr/> Total 26		<hr/> 21

First Arts Examination*Bengal*

Hindus	373	152
Moslems	9	4
Christians	16	5
Others	61	24
<hr/> Total 459		<hr/> 185

North West Provinces

Hindus	36	20
Moslems	4	3
Christians	2	1
<hr/> Total 42		<hr/> 24

Oudh

Religion	No. of candidates	No. passed
Hindus	6	2
Moslems	5	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	11	6

Punjab

Hindus	18	14
Moslems	1	1
Others	1	nil
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	20	15

C. P.

Hindus	5	nil
Moslems	nil	nil
Others	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	6	1

B. A. Examination*Bengal*

Hindus	157	56
Moslems	2	nil
Christians	6	2
Others	42	20
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	207	78

North West Provinces

Hindus	5	4
Moslems	nil	nil
Christians	nil	nil
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	5	4

Oudh

Religion	No. of candidates	No. passed
Hindus	1	nil
Moslems	nil	nil
Christians	nil	nil
<hr/>		<hr/>
Total	1	nil

Punjab

Hindus	3	1
Moslems	nil	nil
Christians	1	nil
<hr/>		<hr/>
Total	4	1

These figures show that in 1870-71 not a single Moslem youth passed the B. A. examination in any of these provinces and only two appeared at the examination. Only 12 Moslems passed the First Arts and 64 the Entrance examination.

These facts and figures were not placed before the Government when Mr. Ameer Ali, the Secretary of the National Muhammadan Association complained that in 1871 the proportion of Moslems to Hindus in the Gazetted appointments was less than one-seventh.

II. Relative strength of the Hindus and Moslems in Government Service

The following table gives full details of the number of Gazetted posts held by Europeans, Hindus and Moslems in 1871.

<i>Post</i>	<i>Europeans</i>	<i>Hindus</i>	<i>Moslems</i>
Covenanted Civil Service	60	1	nil
Judicial officers in			
Non-Regulation districts	47	nil	nil
Extra Assistant Commissioners	26	7	nil
Deputy Magistrates	53	113	30
Income Tax Assessors	11	43	6
Registration Department	33	25	2

<i>Post</i>	<i>Europeans</i>	<i>Hindus</i>	<i>Moslems</i>
Sub-Judges	14	25	8
Munsiffs	1	178	37
Police Department	106	33	nil
Medical Department	89	65	4
Department of Public Instruction	35	141	1
P. W. D.	154	19	nil
P. W. D. Accounts	22	54	nil
Other Departments such as Customs, Marine, Survey etc.	412	10	nil
<hr/>			
	Total 1263	714	88

It is a wonder that in spite of the dearth of Moslem graduates there were as many as 88 Moslems in the Gazetted rank.

In 1872 Sir Syed Ahmed in his famous reply to Hunter's "Indian Mussulmans" wrote: "There are numerous classes of Hindus who are never in the habit of discussing the doctrines of their faith. They therefore had no objection to be educated in that which was even opposed to it. Mohammedans are, however, bound to know all the tenets of their faith, to discuss them, and to regulate their lives accordingly. It is on this account that they have hitherto refrained from availing themselves of an education taught through the medium of a foreign tongue, and which they, therefore, deem opposed to their belief. All history proves that the introduction of new theories, opposed to any established belief, was invariably regarded with suspicion and contempt. It is not to be expected that Mohammedans who are made of much sterner material than Hindus, will adapt themselves so readily to the various phases of this changing age."⁵ This, however, is not supported by the thirty-two essays which were submitted in response to the offer of three prizes made by the "Committee for the better diffusion and advancement of learning among the Mohammedans of India," sponsored by Sir Syed Ahmed soon after his return from England. These essays dealt with the reasons why the Moslems objected to the education imparted in Government institutions. The causes were classified in the Secretary's report under the following heads:

- (1) Absence of religious education.
- (2) Effect of English education in producing disbelief in faith.
- (3) Corruption of morals, politeness and courtesy.
- (4) Prejudices to the effect that to read English is unlawful, and forbidden by the laws of Islam.
- (5) Not considering the feelings of Mussalmans and teaching superfluous subjects which distract the attention of students from important subjects.

The sixth cause, dealing with the habits and manners of the Moslem population is sub-divided under five heads as follows: (a) "That the richer classes educate their children at home, and think it below their position to send them away from home to Government educational institutions, where children of all classes are allowed to associate with each other, (b) That they, moreover, having ample means of livelihood, owing to a foolish fondness for their children, consider education unnecessary for them, (c) That the higher classes of Mussulmans are dissipated, and that even the middle classes are naturally indolent, indifferent to education, and improvident, (d) That the Mussulmans not being generally on terms of friendly intercourse with Englishmen, there is no influence that can make English education popular amongst them, (e) That the Mussulmans having a hereditary liking for the military profession, have no great desire to acquire learning."⁶ This is an excellent analysis of the feelings and sentiments of the Moslem community which prompted them to keep themselves away from English educational institutions.

The disparity in educational qualifications between the Hindus and the Moslems was one of the fundamental causes of difference in Ideas and outlook on the political problems between the two communities. If the Hindus demanded the introduction of representative system in the local bodies and provincial legislature, the Moslems opposed it mainly because they feared that the numerical superiority of the Hindus would put them at a disadvantage. The Hindus thought that the introduction of simultaneous competitive examination in England and India for the recruitment to the Indian Civil Service would enable larger number of Indians to compete, but the Moslems feared that such a measure would give little

chance to men of their community to come out successful. They could tolerate the domination of Europeans but not of the Hindus, over whom they had ruled for several centuries.

III. Political Ideas of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898)

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was one of the most remarkable leaders of thought in the nineteenth century. He entered Government service in 1837 as Shiristehdar of the Criminal Department in the Sadar Amin's office in Delhi. Within four years by virtue of his keen intellect and steady application to duty he was promoted to the office of Munsiff. He retired as the Subordinate Judge in 1876. He himself had not the benefit of England education and yet he became its greatest champion in his own community. He rendered yeoman service to the cause of Indian society and polity as a member of the Supreme Legislative Council, to which he was nominated by Lord Lytton in 1878 and re-nominated by Lord Ripon in 1880. He made himself familiar with the works of John Stuart Mill. He was a strong advocate of individual liberty but he knew its limitations.

His earliest work was a pamphlet in Urdu entitled *Risala-Ashab-i-Bhagwat-i-Hind*, which discussed the cause of the Indian Revolt and suggested means for avoiding the recurrence of such an event. Five hundred copies of the book were printed in a confidential edition in 1858; all these copies, excepting two, were despatched to England for circulation among important members of Parliament. One of the two copies was submitted to the Government of India and the other retained for his personal use. One eminent historian writes that the book was not published in India at all and that it was translated into English in 1873 by Sir Auckland Colvin and Lt. Colonel Graham.⁷ But it was translated earlier, in 1860 by Captain W. N. Lees, LL. D. and published in Calcutta.* Syed Ahmed held that the primary cause of the revolt was the exclusion of Indians from a share in the government of the country. He wrote: "It has been universally allowed that the admittance of the people to a share in the Government under which they live, is necessary to its

* This book is available in the National Library.

efficiency, prosperity and permanence. It is from the people of the country alone that the rulers can ascertain the propriety or impropriety of a measure previous to the state of things reaching the point when no remedy can prove efficacious. It is, therefore, evident that the laws and regulations of the Government should be framed so as to suit the habits and customs of the people, rather than the latter modified to suit the former. I admit that it was impossible as well as undesirable for the people of this country to be represented in Parliament, but certainly there did not exist any objection to their admission into the Legislative Council of India, and undoubtedly their nonadmission formed the main originating cause of the rebellion to which all other causes were secondary."⁸ The other contributory causes of the Revolt were the harsh and contemptuous behaviour of the British officials towards the Indians, and not holding Darbars and not conferring rank and honour due to merit. According to him the introduction of female education was also a cause of misunderstanding on the part of Indians.

(a) Relation between the People and Government

Some very wise observations on the relation between the people and the Government are to be found in this pamphlet. He makes a fervent plea for the maintenance of friendly relations between the governors and the governed. He adds "As in private friendships two persons are united by the bond of a common friendship, so also should a Government and its people be knit together in like manner. The people and the Government I may liken to a tree, the later being the root, and the former the growth of that root. As the root is, so will the tree be. Friendship, intercourse, and sympathy are, therefore, not wholly dependent for their existence on the givers and recipients being of the same religion, race, or country."⁹ It is, however, surprising that while Sir Syed Ahmed Khan laid so much emphasis on friendship between the rulers and the ruled, he advocated segregation of Hindus from the Moslems in the army. He held that the English should have followed the practice of Nadir Shah, who maintained the Persian and the Afghan armies separate and in equal strength so that one might be subdued with the help of the other. Similarly the Hindus and Moslems should have

been kept in different regiments. He attributed the revolt to the fraternal feeling that grew up between the Hindu and the Moslem soldiers. As early as 1858 he harped upon the traditional antagonism amongst them and designated them as "two antagonistic races". "If separate regiments of Hindus and separate regiments of Mohammedans had been raised," he argued, "this feeling of brotherhood could not have arisen, and in my opinion, the Mohammedan regiments would not have refused to receive the new cartridges."¹⁰ The Government was not slow to learn the lesson of 'divide and rule'.

(b) Individual liberty and legislation

Sir Syed did not like to have much interference of the State in the social and economic affairs of the people. The Deccan Agriculturalists' Relief Bill sought to regulate the rate of interest. Sir Syed opposed this. He did not speak extempore, nor did he read out the prepared speech, but handed it over to Mr. Fitzpatrick, who read it out in the Supreme Legislature. Sir Syed held that no law could be framed which would do away with the necessity of borrowing or put a stop to exorbitant rates of interest. In conclusion he said: "An experience of thirty five years, during which I had the honour of serving as a judicial officer of the Government, induces me to say that all rules which aim at regulating the rate of interest on private loans, or which place difficulties in the way of their recovery, far from relieving, are injurious to the borrower, whose necessities compel him to evade the law by secret and collusive agreements of which the terms are more onerous because they cannot be enforced."¹¹ He was eminently practical in his views.

The task of piloting the Vaccination Bill fell upon Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Mr. Fitzpatrick read out the Mover's remarks on the Bill on the 11th September, 1879. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was somewhat apologetic in his tone, because the Bill sought to interfere with the personal liberty of citizens. He said: "I am one of those who look upon all compulsory legislative measures as justifiable only in cases of extreme necessity. Personal liberty of the subject is one of the greatest and dearest privileges which have been conferred upon this country by the British rule; and in common with millions of

my countrymen I hold them sacred." But the interest of society and especially that of security of human life demand the introduction of the principle of compulsion. Following the strain of writing of John Stuart Mill, he wrote: "Even if it be granted that a man has a right, if he chooses, to die of small pox, no respect for personal liberty would justify the harm which he does to his neighbours by conveying infection."¹² In support of his bill he said on the 9th July, 1880 that such a bill had already been passed in Patiala in 1876 and in Kapurthala subsequently. Here is a case in which the Indian States took the lead and British India followed suit.

(c) *Law and Justice*

Sir Syed Ahmed was a warm advocate of codification of law. He did not like to leave anything vague in the domain of law and justice. While speaking in the Supreme Legislative Council on January 20, 1882, he said: "At present, whilst a splendid Penal Code and a Criminal Procedure regulate criminal matters, the Civil law is administered on the somewhat vague, though noble, principle of 'Justice, equity and good conscience'—a principle much of whose beauty is practically spoilt by the fact that individual judges in similar cases do not take the same view of that noble maxim. The result is an uncertainty as to rights which reduces litigation to a form of pecuniary speculation, from which springs the most deplorable class of suits, in which parties, agreeing as to facts, have no authoritative means of ascertaining the law. Codification and codification alone, can remedy the evils which arise from uncertainty of the law; codification alone can enable the public to know their exact rights and obligations; code alone can enable proprietors and litigants, advocates and Judges, to know for certain the law which regulates the dealings of citizens in British India; code alone will enable the deliberate will of the legislature to prevail over the opinions of individual Judges." Some people argued that Indians were unfamiliar with the idea of living under systematically codified law. To them he cited the Code of Manu and *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*.

The Ilbert Bill controversy produced a rich crop of political speeches and pamphlets. A number of learned men and

brilliant orators, both Indian and European, spoke either in favour of or in opposition to the Bill. But none excepting Sir Syed Ahmed Khan could discuss the question from the standpoint of political philosophy, nor could anyone else maintain such philosophic detachment. Some Europeans and Eurasians contended that Indian Legislature had no jurisdiction to make laws for them. To this Sir Syed replied: "We derive our power from the great Parliament of England; and so long as we do not exceed those powers, it seems to me erroneous to doubt the legislative authority of this Council in all matters connected with India." In supporting the right of Indian Magistrates to try the Europeans he said: "The exercise of civil jurisdiction by Native Judges in cases to which Europeans are parties has not given rise to any injustice, not even to complaint on the score of national differences. All Native Magistrates already exercise jurisdiction in criminal matters in cases in which Europeans are complaints and seek redress from the courts as injured parties. I have never yet heard that European British subjects have any objection to resort to Native Magistrates for redress; indeed they do so without any hesitation." Such arguments were adduced by some other speakers too. But he rose to an unparalleled height when he spoke of the majority of law: "What the people obey in countries blessed with a civilised Government is, not the authority of individuals, but the mandates of the law. So long as the law is just, impartial and humane, so long as the proper administration of that Law can be secured, the nationality of those who carry out the law should be of no consequence even to the sentimentalists. What requires respect, submission and obedience is the authority of the law, and not that of individuals, and even those who regard the people of India as not entitled to equality with themselves might, if they only consider the question calmly, feel that native magistrates are only the servants of the States, charged with the duty of carrying out the behests of the law. It is the duty of the State to provide for the proper administration of the law. To secure this object, the States has to choose the best available agency, and it seems a somewhat untenable and unjust proposition for any subjects of the State to insist that, in the choice of officers, government shall confine itself to any particular race

or section of the community."¹³ We have ransacked the Proceedings of the Supreme Legislative Council for finding out the political ideas of the Indian members of the Legislature but seldom have we come across brilliant passages like this speech of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

(d) Education and Government

Sir Syed Ahmed was not in favour of handing over the control and management of educational institutions to the Government. He knew that the Government was not amenable to the control of the people of the country. If the management of education be placed under the authority of the Government, Indians would have little chance of building up the life and moulding of the character of the citizens according to their own light and liking. In his evidence before the Education Commission he said: "I am personally of opinion that the duty of Government, in relation to public instruction, is not to provide education to the people, but to aid the people in procuring it for themselves." He substantiated his point by stating that Indians "cannot obtain suitable education unless the people take the entire management of their education into their own hands, and that it is not possible for Government to adopt a system of education which may answer all purposes and satisfy the special wants of the various sections of the population. It would, therefore, be more beneficial to the country if Government should leave the entire management of their education to the people, and withdraw its own interference."¹⁴ He may thus be considered the earliest champion of autonomy in the field of education.

(e) Representative Government and Two-Nation theory

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan pleaded for the inclusion of Indians in the Legislative Council in 1858 indeed, but he did not suggest that the members should be elected by the people. He did not consider representative system suitable for this country, because of the lack of homogeneity amongst the different communities inhabiting India. In January, 1883 while speaking on the Central Provinces Local Self-Government Bill in the Supreme Legislative Council, he said: "I am convinced that no part of India has yet arrived at the stage when the system of representation can be adopted, in

its fullest scope, even in regard to local affairs. The principle of self-government by means of representative institutions is, perhaps, the greatest and noblest lesson which the beneficence of England will teach India. But, in borrowing from England the system of representative institutions, it is of the greatest importance to remember those socio-political matters in which India is distinguishable from England." He argued that the introduction of representative institutions in India would be attended with considerable difficulty and socio-political risks. He explained his idea thus: "The system of representation by election means the representation of the views and interests of the majority of the population, and, in countries where the population is composed of one race and one creed, it is no doubt the best system that can be adopted. But, my lord, in a country like India, where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in its modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election pure and simple, for representation of various interests on the local board and district councils, would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations. So long as differences of race and creed, and the distinction of caste form an important element in the socio-political life of India, and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large, the system of election, pure and simple, cannot be safely adopted. The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community, and the ignorant public would hold Government responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever."¹⁵ Did he foresee the terrible communal riots that tarnished the history of India in the first half of the present century?

Sir Syed's antagonism to the representative system grew more bitter after the birth of the Indian National Congress. In an article contributed to the *Allypore Institute Gazette* in November, 1886, he wrote: "In India two sections of the people are ready to hand, and two sections whose interests

and prejudices constantly clash, and which differ in a far more radical way than any two parties in England, and there seems no reason to doubt that the two parties would correspond with these fundamental divisions. We find a tendency towards this already in municipalities. And if at any future time there should be a Parliament with Hindus and Mohammedans sitting on the two sides of the house, it is probable that the animosity which would ensue would far exceed anything that can be witnessed in England. For the safeguard of the English system is—that the party in power is always in dread of being left in a minority by the defection of some of the adherents; but this safeguard would not exist in India because a Hindu would not turn Mohammedan and *vice versa*. Moreover, the Mohammedans would be in a permanent minority and their case would resemble that of the unfortunate Irish members in the English Parliament, who have always been outvoted by the Englishmen. The majority in a Parliament has absolute control and a study of the habits of assemblies points to the conclusion that bodies of men are less generous in regarding opponent (sic!) than individual rulers are. If this were so, and one side were perpetually outvoted, there is only too much fear that the minority would ultimately take the matter into their own hands and see if they could gain by force what they were unable to obtain by constitutional means.”¹⁶ The last sentence was ominous. It was the prelude to the Muslim League policy of Direct Action. This article was quoted in the *Statesman* and the *Hindu*.¹⁷

A. O. Hume criticised Sir Syed's views in an article published in the *Statesman*. He cited the example of the Bombay Municipal Council in which Christians, Hindus, Moslems and Parsis sat and transacted business utterly oblivious of religious differences. He added: “Let me say, to begin with, that the majority of Hindus and Mohammedans are practically of the same nationality, and not of different ones. Their religious creed is different and their prejudices may at times clash, but as for their essential interests, they are absolutely identical, for all are equally interested in an efficient protection to life and property, moderate taxation, a just land revenue system, and generally a wise

administration of the country in all respects. Nothing is more absolutely false than that the public interests of Hindus and Mahommedans are in any way divergent."¹⁸

These arguments failed to convince Sir Syed. In December, 1887 he discussed the feasibility of adopting four alternative methods of constituting Legislative Councils and found each of them unsatisfactory. First, there might be joint electorate based on universal suffrage with the proviso that Moslems should vote for the Moslem candidates and Hindus also for their own coreligionists. But the adoption of such a method would mean that the proportion of Hindu and Moslem members in the Legislature would be 4 to 1. Secondly, instead of adopting universal suffrage property qualification might be insisted on for voters. In this case the Hindus being in possession of much greater wealth and income, the Moslems, who were poor, would get no chance of being elected to the Council. Thirdly, in accordance with the respective population strength of the two communities, a certain number of seats in the Viceroy's Legislative Council might be reserved for the Hindus and Moslems respectively. Even in this case the Moslems would invariably form the minority. Fourthly, he took up for the sake of argument a contingency in which there might be separate electorate and reservation of equal number of seats for the Hindus and Moslems. Even in such a case, he said, "there would be few Muslim members as well versed and as efficient as the Hindu members and there would be few of them indeed who would leave off their business to serve on the Council at their own expense at Simla or Calcutta."¹⁹

It is needless to say that all the Moslems did not subscribe to the views of Sir Syed Ahmed. On the 28th of December, 1889 Hamid Ali Khan, a Lucknow Barrister, said in the Bombay session of the Congress: "Permit me to say that we are all endeavouring to create a United India, and form ourselves into one nation, so far, at least, as our political rights and wants are concerned." He denied that there were Hindu interests and Moslem interests and declared: "Our interests in all such matters are absolutely one and undivided."

IV. Mahomed Yusuf

While Sir Syed Ahmed Khan opposed the introduction of elective system both in the Central Legislature and in the local bodies, Mahomed Yusuf, who represented Bihar in the Bengal Legislative Council, stood forth as a champion of democracy. He delivered a memorable speech in that Council in May 1883 in reply to G. C. Paul's opposition to the Local Self-Government Bill. He said: "If an opportunity is not afforded, there never will be a beginning. There is no school for education in political matters, where people should first go and qualify themselves in politics in the abstract before you could put them in charge of a district for the purpose of self-government; but if the people are sufficiently advanced and educated in a general way, you may safely entrust them with the duties of self-government, although they may not have had a trial before. To entrust them with such duties is to begin with their political education, which can only be acquired by practice, and not by going to any particular schools."²⁰

Mahomed Yusuf then claimed separate representation for the Mohammedans. He quoted in support of his argument the 47th paragraph of the Report of the Commissioner of the Presidency Division who had remarked, "that the agitators in this matter are Hindus, and that Local Boards, instituted as proposed will be comprised almost entirely of Hindus to the exclusion of Mohammedans." Mahomed Yusuf said: "The Council will be pleased to remember that though in most places the Mohammedan population forms a minority as compared with the larger bodies of the Hindus, still in many places they form a large proportion of the population. Or it may be that in some places, though fewer, the case is the reverse, and the Hindus form a minority. In such cases, when there is party spirit and angry feeling between the two classes of people, it is necessary to reserve power for the representation of the minority. The Bill proposes to provide for this by nomination, but it would be an advantage and a more full recognition of the claims of the Mohammedan population if provision could be made in the Bill for the election of Mohammedans by reserving a certain number of membership for that community."²¹ It must be noted that

Mahomed Yusuf did not claim separate representation for the Moslems only but for any minority community, be it Hindu or Mohammedan by religion. This speech shows that the claim for separate representation of the Moslem community is long anterior to the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme to which the origin of this claim is generally ascribed.

Mahomed Yusuf's speech is still more remarkable for the advocacy of women's franchise for the first time in all Indian legislature. He said: "As in the Municipal Bill, so in this, the voters must be of the male sex, and females are purposely excluded. There may be some history attached to the question of female suffrage in other countries, but the matter is worth our serious and unbiased consideration here. Females are in many cases holders of large Zamindaris and they manage their own property themselves. It would, therefore, be hard to exclude them from exercising the power of voting in the Self-Government scheme. The reasons which justify the exclusion of females in other countries do not justify their exclusion in this country. If females were incapable of holding property and managing it, there might be some reason for their exclusion in this Bill. But to say to females, you may manage it yourself, and you may appoint your servants and managers privately, but you shall not be allowed to do so publicly, passes beyond my humble comprehension. The answer to the position which I take up is that it will open a wide door to fraud. But even in the case of males there is fraud practised, and in order to avoid fraud, it does not follow that males or females should be excluded altogether, because means could be devised to defeat fraud and prevent the perpetuation of it."²² It is a great tribute to the democratic spirit of Islam that one of its followers was the first to claim political rights for Indian women.

V. Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928)

Ameer Ali, the famous historian, passed the M. A. Examination of the Calcutta University in History in 1868 and was placed second in the First class. He studied Law in England and was called to the Bar in 1873. He founded the National Mohammedan Association in 1877 with a view to training up the Moslems in public life. He states in his

Memoirs that his object was to counter-balance the immense advantage and preparedness which the Hindu organisations give to their community.²³ In February 1882 the National Mohammedan Association submitted an important Memorial to Lord Ripon praying for the adoption of some effective steps for ameliorating the condition of the Moslems. As many of the facts and arguments adduced in the Memorial have been repeated in an article contributed by Ameer Ali to the "Nineteenth Century" of the same year, there can be little doubt that the Memorial was written by him.

Ameer Ali traces the decadence of the Moslems from 1837 when English substituted Persian as the court language. He quotes with approval Hunter's remark to the effect that there was scarcely a Government office in which a Moslem could hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of ink-pots and mender of pens. He showed that the proportion of Moslem officers to Hindu fell from one in seven in 1871 to one in ten in 1880. The proportion of Moslem to the Hindu students prosecuting studies in schools and colleges was much lower. In 1881-82 the number of Moslem students pursuing their studies in colleges in the Bengal Presidency was 106 as compared to 30 in Madras, 7 in Bombay, 29 in the N. W. Provinces, 7 in Oudh, and 13 in the Punjab. In the High Schools of Bengal there were 3831 Moslem students as against 117 in Madras, 118 in Bombay, 697 (including students in Middle schools) in the N.W. Provinces, and 91 in the Punjab.

Under such circumstances Ameer Ali had to argue that in making appointments to responsible posts undue importance should not be attached to University degrees. He wrote: "It happens frequently that when there are two candidates, one a Hindu, the other Muhammedan, preference is given to the Hindu candidate on the sole ground that he possesses a University certificate, although as regards general education, the Muhammedan may possess superior qualifications." He suggested that "stamina and force of character are as necessary in the lower as in the higher walks of life, and these qualities can not adequately be tested by University examinations." He went so far as to say that a

degree in Law should not be considered an indispensable qualification for the appointment of a Munsiff. It is difficult to understand how a Munsiff who had not studied Law in the University or who had failed to pass the B. L. examination would be able to administer justice.

During the discussions on the Bengal Tenancy Bill in the Supreme Legislative Council, Ameer Ali was practically the sole Indian member to raise his voice on behalf of the Ryots. The fact that the majority of tenants in Bengal proper were Moslems prompted him to espouse their cause. On the 2nd March 1885 he said: "I do not propose to enter here into an examination of that somewhat abstruse question—given to the necessity for legislation to regulate the relation of landlords and tenants in this country—whether the State by ensuring the Zamindars against enhancement and variation of its own demands (and that in effect is the meaning of the Permanent Settlement) had abdicated in perpetuity its legislative functions to protect and safeguard the interests of another class—a much larger and more permanent class. If the contention of the landlords on this head is correct the result necessarily follows that the Government of this country is an incomplete Government, that it has in fact established an *imperium imperio*, and that, so far as the *raiya*s are concerned, it has delegated all its powers to the ever-shifting body of Zamindars."²⁴ History has proved that Ameer Ali's contention was valid and that of Kristodas Pal and other advocates of rights of Zamindars was fallacious. The reversal of Permanent Settlement and the consequent abolition of the Zamindari system was a logical corollary to the integration of Princely states with what was formerly known as British India.

According to W. S. Blunt Ameer Ali and his followers played into the hands of the Government.²⁵ But it must be said that Ameer Ali had the courage to oppose Fitzjames Stephen, who had said that the Queen's Proclamation was 'a mere expression of sentiment and opinion.' On the 4th January, 1884 he spoke in the Supreme Legislative Council in favour of the extension of the Jury system to the cases of Indians too.

In the Memorial of the National Mohammedan Association Ameer Ali had pleaded for the appointment of Moslem High Court Judges on the ground that the Christian and Hindu Judges could not properly decide on intricate points of Mohammedan Law. In 1890 he was elevated to the Bench of the Calcutta High Court. He retired in 1904 and settled in London, where he was the main prop of the Moslem cause.

CHAPTER XIV

SWAMI DAYANANDA (1824-1883)

I. Introduction

Swami Dayananda, the great founder of the Arya Samaj, occupies a unique position in the history of political ideas of modern India. He did not know English language nor did he care to draw inspiration from the political philosophers of the West. When the educated young men of India were slavishly copying the superficial aspects of European civilisation and were making agitation for transplanting the political institutions of England in Indian soil without paying any heed to the genius and culture of the Indian people, Swami Dayananda boldly hurled India's defiance against the social, cultural and political domination of the West. He was the very embodiment of India's instinct of self-preservation. But self-preservation does not mean total isolation and utter exclusion of foreign influence. Science has almost annihilated time and space and it is impossible to shut out the advance of those ideas which are permeating the whole world, as for example, democratic control over the Government of the country. Swami Dayananda, the greatest apostle of the Indo-Aryan culture and civilisation also proved to be the greatest exponent of the most advanced ideas in politics in India. Whereas other leaders of thought movement could influence only the educated people living in urban areas, Swami Dayananda succeeded in carrying his ideas of Liberalism and Nationalism to the very heart of rural India and to the masses tied down to age-long ignorance and superstition. It is to be noted, however, that Swami Dayananda did not only give expression to the spirit of the age, but also formulated political views which were far in advance of his time.

Swami Dayananda is the Rishi or Divine Seer of modern India. Calumny and persecution pursued him throughout his life and he died shunned like a leper by the orthodox Hindus; he was reviled as an imposter by some of the Christian missionaries; he was treated as an enemy by the fanatical Moslems. But with the passing of years the majestic grandeur of his personality and the supreme value of his teachings are being appreciated more and more. Like a skilled physician he diagnosed correctly the maladies from which India was suffering and prescribed remedies, which being properly administered, would make her strong, vigorous and self-confident again. He is the fulfilment of Raja Rammohun Roy and the forerunner of Mahatma Gandhi.

II. Rammohun and Dayananda—a study in comparison and contrast

Before we attempt to analyse the political thought of Swami Dayananda, it would be interesting to attempt a comparison between Rammohun and Dayananda, two of the greatest thought leaders of India in the last century. Both of them were inspired by the idea of regenerating the country, and both were intensely patriotic. We have shown before that Raja Rammohun felt the need of reforming the society and religion of the Hindus in order to secure improvement in their political status. Similarly, Dayananda observes that good Government is no substitute for self-government; that foreigners might govern the country with justice and mildness, that they might rule with impartiality, that is, with equal indifference to all creeds and sects, and might be as charitable in disposition as parents, yet that rule will not be conducive to perfect happiness. "Whatever might be the benefits of foreign rule, the rule of the countrymen is the best of all". In his opinion it is the Vedic Renaissance alone which can bring unity amongst a people divided in language, in culture, and manners and customs. Such a unity is essential for realising the common purpose of all, namely self-government.¹ As in the case of Rammohun, so also in the case of Dayananda, it was the need for ameliorating the political condition of the country which inspired them to make a crusade against the social and

religious customs of the Hindus. It is superfluous to add that both were great fighters; both of them were ever ready to meet an adversary either in a hall of discussion or in the columns of a periodical. Both were skilled dialecticians and drew upon the Sastras or rational principles, over both of which they had equal command. Rammohun had to bear persecution indeed, but the boldness with which Dayananda faced the hostility of his opponents is rare in the history of the world. Madame Blavatsky relates the following incident which throws a flood of light on the character of this tough fighter. "At Benares, a worshipper of the Shiva, feeling sure that His cobra, trained purposely for the mysteries of a Shivaite pagoda, would at once make an end of the Offender's life, triumphantly exclaimed; 'Let the God Vasuki himself show which of us is right!' Dayananda jerked off the cobra twisting round his leg and with a single vigorous movement crushed the reptile's head. 'Let him do so', he quietly assented, 'your god has been too slow. It is I who have decided the dispute.' 'Now go,' added he addressing the crowd, 'and tell everyone how easily perish all false gods ! Truly a marble statue could not be less moved by the raging wrath of the crowd. We saw him once at work. He sent away all his faithful followers, and forbade them either to watch over him or to defend him and stood alone before the infuriated crowd, facing calmly the monster, ready to spring upon him and tear him to pieces."²

Like Raja Rammohun Swami Dayananda severely condemned the caste system. He held that mere accident of birth should not determine the social position of a person. he declared : "Classes of all persons should be determined according to their qualifications and accomplishments and character in the twentyfifth or the sixteenth year, according as they are males or females."³ He showed from the Dharmasutra of Apastamba and proved by appeal to reason that the three twice-born classes should have their food cooked by Sudras.⁴ It should be mentioned in this connection that though the Raja freely mixed with the Moslems and was fond of Moslem dishes, yet for the sake of propriety he took with him a Brahmin cook while sailing for England. But

Swami Dayananda openly partook of dishes prepared by the Sudras.*

Raja Rammohun did not accept the validity of image worship; Swami Dayananda went a step further and asserted that image-worship leads to political slavery and degradation. One of the thirteen charges which he brought against image worship was: "They depend upon the idols for the defeat of their enemies and the triumph of their arms, and therefore, do not exert themselves. The result is that they are defeated, and government of the country, independence and wealth, with its attendant pleasures fall to the lot of their enemies. They are themselves robbed of their independence and reduced to the condition of a subject race, suffer in a hundred different ways like the pony of the baker and the donkey of the potter."⁵

Raja Rammohun, the pioneer of Indian Renaissance, wanted to re-establish the Dharma as set forth in the Vedanta. He stopped short at the Upanishads, whereas Dayananda looked beyond and seized upon the Vedas as the very foundation of Indian life. The spirit in which Swami Dayananda worked to bring back the Vedic past to the life of modern India has been interpreted by Sri Aurobindo in the following words: "He was not only plastic to the great hand of Nature, but asserted his own right and power to use Life and Nature as plastic material. We can imagine his soul crying still to us with our insufficient spring of manhood and action. "Be a thinker, but be also a doer; be a soul, but be also a man; be a servant of God, but be also a master of Nature; for this was what he himself was; a man with God in his soul, vision in his eyes and power in his hands to hew

* Swami Dayananda writes: "All individuals should be placed in different classes according to their qualifications, accomplishments and character. By adopting this system all will advance in every respect because the higher classes will be in constant fear of their children being degraded to the Sudra class, if they are not properly educated. The same fear will also make the children acquire knowledge and culture : whilst the lower classes will be stimulated to exert themselves for admission into the classes above them ." (*Satyartha Prakasa*, p. 92)

out of life an image according to his vision. Hew is the right word, granite himself, he smote out a shape of things with great blows as in granite."⁶

There are some apparent similarities in the views of Raja Rammohun and Swami Dayananda, but in their career, outlook, and mental equipments they are fundamentally different. Raja Rammohun passed the whole of his life in the vortex of worldly affairs; Swami Dayananda left his home and hearth in quest of Truth at the early age of eighteen. The Raja was a sagacious person, capable of managing his own affairs excellently; the Swami could not even dress himself properly when he had to appear before the genteel society. Maharshi Debendranath is said to have been shocked on hearing that the Swami was in the habit of wearing only a piece of loin-cloth and hence cancelled the interview which he had consented to give to the latter. It must be admitted, however, that the Raja's intimate acquaintance with men and affairs gave him great practical sagacity, whereas Swami Dayananda always remained an idealist, soaring high in mental horizon.

Raja Rammohun was a man of wonderful culture. He knew Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian, English, French and Sanskrit. He arrived at a synthesis of different phases of human culture and civilisation and laid down the foundation of the science of comparative religion. Swami Dayananda cared little for any culture excepting the Vedic. He was a master of the Sanskrit language and could interpret the Sastras in an original way by virtue of his command over the grammar and lexicon of Sanskrit. In his zeal to revive the Vedic culture, he could not do justice to Christianity, Islam, Vaisnavism, Saivism, Sikhism and the other religions of India which arose in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He did not see and was determined not to see any good point in these faiths. The psychological explanation of this kind of treatment of other religions in his hand has been offered by Dr. Griswold, a Christian missionary of Lahore, thus: "The character of his mission helps to account for the violence of his methods of controversy. Elizah was not specially gentle in his dealings with the prophets of Baal; nor was Luther very tender toward the Roman Church. In like manner Pandit Dayananda Saraswati stood with his back to the wall, facing

on the one hand the attacks of the Brahmanical hierarchy, and on the other the assaults of the foreign religions, Islam and Christianity. Under these circumstances we can hardly wonder that he struck so hard as he could. Luther dealt heavy blows at the Roman Church as Pandit Dayananda did at the Brahmanical Church. Suppose, an extensive and powerful Muhammedan propaganda, which threatened to devour all the fruits of the Reformation, was found all over Europe. What would Luther have done under these circumstances, but smite the apostate Church at home and the Muhammedan propaganda from abroad with impartial zeal and violence and with no great effort to be fair and appreciative. This illustrates exactly Pandit Dayananda's attitude towards the degenerate Brahmanical church, on the one hand, and the foreign faiths, Christianity and Islam on the other."⁷

Raja Rammohun welcomed western culture and advocated the imparting of higher education through the medium of the English language. Swami Dayananda, on the other hand, represented the reaction against the westernisation of India and pleaded for the adoption of Sanskrit and Hindi as the media of instruction.

Raja Rammohun Roy was of opinion that the revival of the study of the Vedanta would be a potent influence in reforming the Hindu society and in regenerating India. He set the preaching of true religion as enunciated in the Vedanta as the object of the Brahmo Samaj, which he organised. But in the famous letter to Lord Amherst he wrote: "Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedantic doctrines which teach them to believe that all visible things have no real existence, that as father, brother etc. have no actual entity, they consequently deserve no real affection." The Raja failed to reconcile the Vedanta with his schemes of social and educational reforms. Swami Dayananda, however, took his stand firmly on the Vedas and declared that the Vedas offer a complete solution of all the problems of life—social, religious, economic and cultural. He interpreted the Vedas in such a way that there was no incongruity between religion and politics. To him the establishment of good government was the very basis of spiritual life.

III. Dayananda's method of political investigation

Raja Rammohun Roy closely followed the methods of the Historical School as laid down by Aristotle and Montesquieu. Swami Dayananda, on the other hand, may be said to have been totally devoid of all historical sense. He does not care to inquire into the historical evolution of the forms of Government through the impact of economic and cultural forces. To him the Vedas were the bed-rock and acme of human civilisation. The Vedas, according to him, were the sacred revelations from God who is "the primary cause of all true knowledge and of everything known by its means." God being "All-truth, All-knowledge, All-beatitude, Incorporeal, Almighty, Just, Merciful and Omniscient"⁸ knows what form of government is suited best to men and has directly commanded men through the Vedas to follow a particular form of it. The Vedas contain the laws of God which are immutable and unchangeable in character and must be followed by men at all times.

Swami Dayananda was an idealist in politics and he found his inspiration from the study of the Vedas. His method of interpreting the Vedas, however, was quite different from the traditional method of Sayana and Mahidhar. Had he followed Sayana and Mahidhar he would have found little that is really valuable for reconstituting Indian polity. He started with the age-long tradition that the Vedas contain truths which are universal in their application and which can stand the test of acute reason and searching science. All the six schools of Indian Philosophy—the Vaiseshik (1. 1. 3: 10. 2. 90), the Naya (2. 1. 69), the Sankhya (VI. 3. 4 : 1. 147), the Yoga (1.24), the Vedanta (3. 3. 1) and the Purva Mimansa, regard the Vedas as authoritative and fountain-head of all knowledge. The Indian tradition is that even sciences like Medicine, Mathematics, Music, Astronomy, Politics and Economics are based on the Vedas. The basic conception of the ancient Indian culture is that the Veda contains the root of all Dharma, that it can make clear what has been, what is, what is to be, what is near and what is far off.

If such be the real character of the Vedas, to give a liturgical interpretation to the verses of the Vedas, as Sayana

did, is clearly wrong. Swami Dayananda is of opinion that Sayana has imported Pauranik mythology, legends and rituals into the interpretation of the Vedic hymns. He rejects the Puranas altogether and depends on the Brahmanas, Upanisads, Aranyakas, Nirukta and Panini's Grammar for finding out the meanings of the Vedic words. He is determined to interpret the Vedas in a rational way. Swami Dayananda takes as his motto the ancient adage that "Logic is our preceptor and our saint" in interpreting the Vedas. Balkrishna, Principal, Rajaram College, Kolhapur, makes the following illuminating observations on the Swamiji's method of interpreting the Vedas "every verse was to fulfil the twofold test of conforming to logic and science. The hypothesis excluded territorialism, communalism, mythology, iconography, history, legends, even good or bad stories of men and gods from the Vedas. They were not a historical record of the ancestors of the Aryans, they did not present a social, political and ethical picture of the ancient Aryan society, but they are beyond the limitations of space and time as eternal verities. His irrevocable faith in the sacred character of the Vedas led him to purge this lore from Pauranic myths and historical descriptions. He raised them to the highest status of being the fountain-head of all true knowledge and the repository of Brahmanavidya. Aurobindo Ghosh has aptly remarked that as soon as the character of the Veda is fixed in the sense Dayananda gave to it, "the merely ritual, mythological, polytheistic interpretation of Sayana Collapses, the merely meteorological and naturalistic European interpretation collapses. We have instead a real scripture, one of the world's sacred books and the divine word of a lofty and noble religion."⁹

Swami Dayananda has written a commentary on the first seven Mandalas of the Rig Veda and has given a political significance to at least twenty per cent of the verses. He interprets Vrihaspati as the ruler of a big state; he finds political maxims in all the hymns dedicated to Surya and Indra, as he believes the Surya or Indra has been mentioned simply to give an analogy to the functions of government. In his *Rig-vedadi Bhasya Bhumika* he has tried to show that the interpretation given by Mahidhar to some of the Vedic

verses is extremely obscene and, therefore, absurd. He interprets all these verses in a political sense.

Dayananda might or might not have been correct in interpreting the Vedic verses in such a way. It is not even necessary for our purpose to enquire whether this interpretation is correct or not. It is sufficient for our purpose to know that Dayananda saw a meaning and significance in the Vedas which no one else detected. Hence we may take the political views stated in his commentary on the Rig Veda to be expressions of his own opinion. A careful study of the *Rig Veda Bhashya* and the *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhumika* clearly reveals the fact that Swami Dayananda was essentially a person with a political bent of mind. But as the political message of Rammohun was almost forgotten by his countrymen in the turmoil of religious controversy engendered by the Raja's iconoclastic views, so has the supreme importance of Dayananda's political philosophy for the regeneration of India been minimised even by his own followers. The Dayananda Commemoration Volume published on the occasion of the bi-centenary of his death contains many articles from the pens of his followers and admirers, but none of them gives any clear and comprehensive idea about the political theories of the great prophet of Modern India.

In the history of the researches into the ancient Indian polity Swami Dayananda must be given a place of honour. It was he who for the first time brought before the modern world a coherent and comprehensive view of the Indo-Aryan polity. We may not agree with all his ideas regarding the ancient Indian polity, but we must give him the credit for bringing together some of the passages relating to a subject from the Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanisads and the Dharmasastras.

Swami Dayananda's political thought is to be found in (1) the sixth chapter of the *Satyartha Prakash* (1874-75); (2) the *Rig-vedadi Bhashya Bhumika*; (3) the *Samskarabidhi*; (4) the *Vyavaharbhānu* and (5) the numerous passages in his commentary on the Rig Veda.

IV. *His theory of the State*

Swami Dayananda does not make any inquiry about the origin of the state. He concentrates his attention on the discussion of the character of a fully organised state with all its organs of administration. According to him, the State stands for the realisation of the highest objects of life. The object of the State is not merely to look to the secular and material welfare of the citizens but to promote the four-fold objects of human life, namely religion, material prosperity, enjoyment and salvation. According to the Hellenic conception the object of the State is to secure good life. Dayananda is not content with good life only; he wants the State to direct its activities in such a way that these may be conducive to the securing of freedom from the bondage of the world. In another place he formulates the theory that the ends of the States are to secure enlightenment, independence, piety, sound education and to increase material prosperity. Such an all-absorbing object has never been attributed to the State by any political thinker—ancient, medieval or modern.

If the State stands for the realisation of all these objects it may be presumed that it will be an all-absorbing association, and that it will give no scope for the development of other associations within the community. Such is not, however, the idea of Swami Dayananda. To him the State is one of the associations of the community, though it is the most important association.

In his *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhūmika* he explains RV. III, 38.6. in the following way. There should be three associations—the first to look after the political interests of the people and especially to conduct all affairs relating to the state, the second to cultivate and propagate arts and sciences; and the third to preach religion and morality and to check unrighteousness. In the *Satyārtha Prakash* he says that highly learned people should be elected to the Academy of Arts and Sciences; learned as well as pious men should be elected to the Academy of Religion, and famous and pious men should form the *Rajya Sabha* (Council of State). The general policy of the States as well as the laws affecting the welfare of all should receive the sanction of all the three

Sabhas. So far as the general interests are concerned, each Sabha should be dependent on others, but in their respective sphere of activity each should function independently.

The community being politically organised is known as the State. The State has sometimes arrogated to itself the right of denying the existence of all other associations. Thus the French Revolutionary Assembly declared in 1791 that abolition of every kind of corporation found among citizens of the same state is a fundamental basis of the French constitution. The Greek political thinkers like Plato and Aristotle as well as Hegel and Bosanquet regarded the State as an all-absorbing association. Bosanquet observes that the State "includes the entire hierarchy of institutions by which life is determined, from the family to the trade, and from the trade to the Church and the University. It includes all of them not as the mere collection of the growths of the country, but as the structure which gives life and meaning to the political whole, while receiving from it mutual adjustment, and therefore, expansion and a more liberal air."¹⁰

The Pluralists argue that the State is not the all-absorbing unique association which the Monists thought it to be. The State, according to them, is only one of the many associations which exist together in the community. They argue that the social, religious and economic associations represent the interests of their members more truly than does the state, and receive from them more perfect obedience. These associations are, therefore, as sovereign as the State is for its purpose. Prof H. J. Laski in his "Authority in the Modern State" comes to the conclusion that the community in respect of its various associations is "basically federal in nature".¹¹

Swami Dayananda's views regarding the position of the State in the community strikes a *via media* between the two schools of thought discussed above. He does not, on the one hand, hold the State to be an all-absorbing association and, on the other, relegate it to a minor place in the community. According to him, the State is an association within the community indeed, but it is the most important of all associations. He does not deny the existence of cultural (Vidya Sabha) and religious (Dharma Sabha) associations, but he insists that these must work in co-operation with the

State, the political association. Dr. MacIver's conclusion regarding the position of the State was anticipated by Dayananda nearly half-a-century earlier and stated, I believe, in a clearer way. Dr. MacIver observes: "The State has its own unique functions, that of protecting and organising all the others, protecting each in the fulfilment of its essential service, co-ordinating them all under its common law, lending to each the aid of its central organisation. The State has in its own political way to adjust the respective claims and further the respective ends of all the associations, groups, and smaller communities whose single common instrument it is."¹²

Dr. MacIver has not clearly stated how the State would simply confine itself to the functions of protecting and not encroach upon the functions of other associations within the community. Swami Dayananda says that the political assembly should not make any law which affects the culture and religion of the community without the consent of the Vidya Sabha and the Dharma Sabha. In this way the important associations of the community would be brought in close contact with one another. The State would protect the general interests of the community, while the other associations would look to the promotion of their own interests in their respective spheres. In case of conflict among these associations the political assembly in consultation with the bodies concerned would arbitrate. It must be noted, however, that in Swami Dayananda's conception of the life of the community, cooperation and not conflict is the basic principle.

He cites a verse from the Yajurveda in his *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhumika* to show the organic nature of the whole community. He explains it in the following manner: "God declares that full strength is my arms, good work, the organs of sense and mind are my hands, and politics, valour, patience, and knowledge are like my soul. A good state is like my back, Army and Treasury are like belly, the Happiness and Prosperity of subjects are my neck and navel, Trade and Statistics are my thighs, the unity and cooperation of the subjects and the political assembly are like my knees. Those who do the excellent work of protecting the subjects

in the manner indicated above are like all the limbs of my body."¹³

In his *Rigvedadi Bhashya* he has emphasised at many places the need for cooperation between the rulers and the ruled.¹⁴ According to him, there cannot be any prosperity nor even good government without the identification of the interests of those who are charged with the task of governing and those who are to be governed. All the individuals in the community are to be inspired by the common ideal of promoting Dharma and increasing the material and spiritual happiness of the body politic. It is needless to say that in these days of class consciousness and class hostility Dayananda's ideal should be placed in the forefront of all schemes and programmes of reform. But the difficulty is that the modern world has almost entirely lost sight of the philosophy of life, without which such co-operation is impossible. Dayananda was fully aware of it and hence he reiterated again and again the supreme need of upholding Dharma in every sphere of human activity.

V. Dayananda on the form of government

It has already been noticed that Swami Dayananda did not formulate his political ideas in the form of a thesis. He put his original ideas in the form of commentaries on the ancient texts as was the traditional custom of philosophers in India. However orthodox an interpreter of the culture and civilisation of an ancient past might be, he cannot completely shake off the influence of the environment in which he lives. Swami Dayananda made a crusade against the Westernisation of India but he could not be immune from the influence of democratic and republican ideas which were imported from the west. Hence we find him attributing republican ideas not only to the Vedas but also to the Dharma Shastras.

All the eminent orientalists who have written on Indo-Aryan polity are of opinion that monarchy was the normal form of government in the Vedic age. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal observes : "The early Vedas know only monarchy. Departure from this normal constitution was made in post-Vedic times."¹⁵ Dr. P. Bose Says : "The Government by the king was the

normal polity of the early as also of the late Aryans in India."¹⁶ But long before the researches of these scholars Swami Dayananda saw, rather with a distorted vision, references to Republicanism in the Vedas. Wherever he finds the term Raja he interprets it as Sabhapati or president. He is of opinion that no human being can occupy the position of king. God is the only king whom all should obey. Only that State prospers in which the people firmly believe that the all-powerful God is the protector of the people, that He is the bestower of knowledge and happiness and that He alone is the king in all respects.¹⁷

Swami Dayananda is dead against the rule by one man. In his *Satyartha Prakash* he says that absolute power should not be entrusted to one man. An autocratic king never allows others to be equal to himself. His own personality overshadows that of others. As a tiger eats up the other strong and plump beasts, so does a man being entrusted with autocratic power destroy other aspiring persons. He would somehow or other rob and unjustly punish those who would show the least sign of prosperity.¹⁸ In his *Rigvedadi Bhashya Bhumika* he observes that where one man is obeyed as king, all the subjects are condemned to live in misery. They suffer from the paucity of the best things.¹⁹ In another place he says that the king is also called murderer of subjects because out of his greediness he destroys the substance of the subjects. It is not proper, therefore, to elect one man as king.²⁰ Again, he declares that an autocrat is sure to be partial in order to fulfil his own selfish ends.²¹ The story of Gobargand which he relates with great gusto illustrates the supreme contempt which Dayananda felt for autocracy.²²

Swami Dayananda admitted the necessity of having a President for representing the unity of the State. The President is to be elected by the people. The right of ruling the people is to be conferred by the people themselves.²³ The man who is learned, pious, highly spoken of by judges, whose conduct satisfies all the subjects, should be obeyed as President.²⁴ The candidate for Presidentship should be thoroughly examined first and if he is found to be highly learned and righteous, with a disposition to do good to all, he should be elected as President of the State.²⁵ The President then, according to

Dayananda's ideal, should not be a dark horse as the Presidential candidates of the U.S.A. often are.

It would be interesting to examine in this connection how Dayananda could fit in his theory of republicanism with the divine right of kingship theory, which is palpable in the Dharma Shastras. Manu Samhita declares that God has created king by taking particles from Indra, Vayu, Yama, Surya, Agni, Varuna, Chandra and Kuvera.²⁶ Dayananda interprets this verse as meaning to say that the President must be powerful like electricity; he should be as dear as air or one's own life to the people, he should be as impartial as Yama the king of Death, he should, like the sun, dispel the darkness of ignorance and make manifest learning, justice and piety, like Agni he should destroy the wicked, he should bind the wicked as Varuna does, he should administer to the happiness of the best people as Chandra or Moon does, and be able to fill up the treasury like Kuvera.²⁷ If such an allegorical interpretation of kingship be accepted, the theory of divine origin or divine right of kingship emerges. Jayaswal holds that "The Hindu theory of kingship was not permitted to degenerate into a divine imposture and profane autocracy."²⁸ This contention is not accepted by U. N. Ghoshal, who cites the concluding verse of Chapter VIII of Santi Parvan (Mahabharata), and argues that the king was regarded as equal to a devata and not as a mere Naradevata.²⁹ Dr. N. C. Banerjee, on the other hand, supports Dayananda's and, therefore, Jayaswal's theory and says : "Hindu kingship was not a divine institution. The righteous king was venerated as a beneficent spirit and was often spoken of as a deva, though this did not by any means characterise kingship as something divine no more than the other institutions or created objects."³⁰ Whatever might be the agreement or difference of opinion on this particular point between Dayananda and the modern researchers, the angle of vision of the former is entirely different from that of the latter. The modern researchers are simply unfolding the historic polity of the ancient indo-Aryans, whereas Dayananda is laying down the norm or model for the future polity of India.

We have seen that Swami Dayananda was in favour of republican form of government. A republic might be oligarchic

or democratic in constitution. Which of these two forms appealed to him? He has nowhere given a clear answer to this question, but from the general tenor of his arguments we may conclude that he was in favour of an aristocracy within democracy, which, according to the high authority of Bryce, is the most perfect form of government. He speaks of election of the president and councillors by the people, which shows that he advocates the cause of democracy. But those who are to be elected must be men of light and learning. In many passages of his *Rig Veda Bhashya* he has emphasised the need for electing only the most learned and pious men as councillors. He observes that if the persons entrusted with state affairs are men of learning and if they make united efforts with one united council they would be able to secure great power for the State.³¹

VI. *The three Assemblies*

While Raja Rammohun was in favour of a rigid separation of the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary, Swami Dayananda advocated a close interdependence of these bodies. He opines that the Assembly should be presided over by the King, but the King and the Assembly should be interdependent on each other. Both the King and the assembly should be controlled by the people. But the people in their turn should be governed by the Assembly. He held up something like the British Constitution as the ideal. The people are to be the ultimate sovereign. They are vested with the power of electing the members of the Assembly. Thus he writes : "Let all men, therefore, elect the most learned men, as members of the Educational Assembly (Vidya Sabha), the most devout men, as members of the Religious Assembly (Dharma Sabha) and men of the most praiseworthy character as members of the Legislative Assembly (the Rajya Sabha).³² He sets up, however, exceptionally high qualifications for the membership of these assemblies. He sternly warns against the election of "ignorant fools" to these assemblies. The members of Assemblies must be not only learned but also be men of good deeds. Their minds should be controlled by practising meditation and Yoga. He reminds the electors that he who cannot control his own mind and senses, can never keep the people under

\ control.³³ The great teacher lays down the eternally true principle of popular government when he says : "Let all members and leaders always walk in the path of rectitude, keep the senses under perfect control and keep aloof from sin." This is far more comprehensive than the pious resolution passed by certain political parties to elect only those who possess integrity and efficiency.

Swami Dayananda does not clearly explain the interrelation between the three assemblies. He merely states : 'Let the three Assemblies harmoniously work together, and make good laws, and let all abide by those laws. Let them all be of one mind in affairs that promote the happiness of all.'³⁴ This is an ideal no doubt. But there may arise conflicts between the three assemblies. The voice of which body would prevail in that case? It appears that Swami Dayananda would allow autonomy to educational and religious bodies. Referring to the three assemblies, he says : "Let each discuss and decide subjects that concern it." Normally the Political or Legislative assembly should not interfere with the decision arrived at by the Educational and Religious Assemblies. But the Legislative Assembly cannot hold itself totally aloof in educational and religious matters. One writer contends that Swami Dayananda 'subjects the political rulers of the state to the spiritual leaders of the community; the Rajya Sabha is subject to the guidance of the Dharma Sabha'.³⁵ But no where does the Swami make such a statement.

The Dharma Sabha is to consist of the most devout people. They need not be ascetics. But the intervention of ascetics is sought in the case of equality of votes for the supporters and opponents of a proposal in the Rajya Sabha. He does not entrust the President with a casting vote. The matter is referred to the arbitration of the Sannyasis, who having forsaken the world and received enlightenment, are in a position to take a dispassionate view of the matter. ³⁶ Here he is probably thinking of an extraordinary circumstance, and not providing an institutional check on the Rajya Sabha. The members of the Vidya Sabha, Dharma Sabha and the Rajya Sabha must belong to the orders of Brahmacharis, Grihastas and Vanaprasthis, and not of Sannyasis. The members of the Sabha must be conversant with the four

Vedas and the science of religion. They must also be keen logicians and masters of language. Swami Dayananda is so much obsessed with the requisite qualifications of members that he states : "Even a meeting of thousands of men can not be designated an *Assembly*, if they be destitute of such high virtues as self-control or truthful character, be ignorant of the *Vedas* and be men of no understanding like Sudras. Let no man abide by the law laid down by men who are altogether ignorant, and destitute of the knowledge of the *Veda*, for whosever obeys the law propounded by ignorant fools falls into hundreds of kinds of sin and vice. Therefore, let not ignorant fools be ever made members of the aforesaid three Assemblies—Political, Educational and Religious."^{36 (a)}

Here he is laying down a principle, which strikes at the root of the very existence of the state. The observance of law is made here conditional. The citizens are given the right to disobey a law laid down by such people as are ignorant of the Vedas. Who is to decide whether the makers of a law are duly qualified or not? If that right is given to individual citizens, chaos and confusion would follow. One may argue that Swami Dayananda is here denying the right of the British authorities, who were certainly not conversant with the Vedas, to make law and consequently to govern India. In that case he may be said to have anticipated Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of Civil Disobedience.

A professor of Political Science accuses Swami Dayananda of advocating a theocratic State.³⁷ But theocracy has been defined in the Oxford Universal Dictionary as 'a form of Government in which God (or a deity) is recognised as the King or immediate ruler, and his laws are taken as the statute-book of the Kingdom, these laws being usually administered by a priestly order as his ministers and agents; hence (loosely) a system of government by a sacerdotal order, claiming a divine commission.' No one was a greater enemy of the priestly class than Swami Dayananda. He never refers to the King as the vicegerent of God. He explains away Manu's observation (VII. 4-5) that the king has been made out of the essence of Indra, Vayu, Yama, Sun, Fire, Varuna, Moon and the lord of riches. He refrains from quoting Manu's dictum that the king is the great divinity in the shape of a

man. As he is against the hereditary principle of succession even to the caste one is born, he provides for the election of the king by the people.³⁸ Having spoken of the election of members of the Assembly, he writes : "Let that great man among them, who possesses most excellent qualities, is highly accomplished, and bears most honourable character, be made the Head or President of the Political Assembly."^{38(a)} He designates this President as King. Dayananda, therefore, is not an upholder of theocracy, not even of benevolent monarchy. He concludes the Chapter on Raja Dharma indeed with the observation: "We are the subjects of the Lord of the Universe—the King of Kings. He is our true King and we are all His humble servants. May we in this world, through His mercy, be privileged to occupy kingly and other high offices and may He make us the means of advancing His eternal justice."³⁹ The expression of such sentiments alone does not make one a believer in theocracy.

VII. Rule of Law

Like the ancient Greek philosophers, Swami Dayananda held the Law alone as the real king.⁴⁰ He exhorts all to remember the teaching of the Vedic text which says : "Verily the just Law alone is the true King, yes, the just Law is the true religion."⁴¹ He places the Law above the King. In a panegyric over the impersonal Law he writes: "The *Law* alone is the true Governor that maintains order among the people. The Law alone is their Protector. The Law keeps awake whilst all the people are fast asleep, the wise, therefore, look upon the Law above as *Dharma* or Right. When rightly administered the Law makes all men happy but when administered wrongly that is, without due consideration as to the requirements of justice it ruins the king. All the four classes would become corrupt, all order would come to an end, there would be nothing but chaos and corruption if the Laws were not properly enforced. Where the Law—which is likened unto a fear-inspiring man, black in colour and with red eyes—striking fear into the hearts of the people, and preventing them from committing crimes, rules supreme, there the people never go astray, and consequently live in happiness, if it be administered by a just and learned man...The *Law*

rightly administered by the King greatly promotes the practice of virtue, acquisition of wealth and secures the attainment of the heart-felt desires of his people. But the same Law destroys the King who is sensual, indolent, crafty, malevolent, mean and low-minded." This passage clearly shows that Swami Dayananda was a true democrat, and not a monarchist, though for the sake of making a show of conforming to the usages of the ancient law-givers he used the term King for the head of the executive and President of the Legislative Assembly. He takes care, however, to note that the King along with the Assembly should be controlled by the people.⁴²

The English Constitution has got a famous legal fiction that the King can do no wrong. Swami Dayananda, however, does not admit the necessity of placing any one above the Law. He does not like to provide even a separate set of judicial courts for the trial of King and other high officers. Manu states that for the offence for which an ordinary person would be punished with a fine or one *Karsapanam*, a penalty of one thousand *Karsapanas* should be imposed upon the King, if he is found guilty thereof.⁴³ Dayananda upholds this dictum and elaborates it by stating that while the punishment inflicted on the king should be thousand times heavier than on an ordinary person, the penalty on King's minister should be eight hundred times, the official lower than him seven hundred, and one still lower six hundred and so on. He further states that even the lowest official, such as a constable should be punished not less than eight times as heavily as an ordinary man would be. He argues that if the Government servants are not punished more severely than ordinary people, they would tyrannise over them.⁴⁴ He raises in this connection the interesting question as to who will punish high dignitaries of the state like the King and Lord Chief Justice? He himself supplies the answer that the Assembly should punish them. He further raises the question : 'Why will the King and other high personages allow the assembly to punish them?' He gives the following cogent reasoning : "What is a king but a man endowed with virtue and favoured by fortune. Were he to go unpunished, why would others obey the law? Besides if the people and other persons in authority and the Assembly would deem it just and necessary to punish

the King, how can he single-handed refuse to suffer punishment?" This line of argument clearly shows that he advocated virtually a republican system, under which the King and not his ministers, is to be impeached. He adduces another argument in favour of punishing the misdeeds of the King. "Were the King and other high personages to go free, the King, ministers, and other men of influence and power would simply set justice and righteousness at naught, sink into the depths of injustice and ruin the people as well as themselves."⁴⁵ Such principles deserve to be engraved on stone and placed in prominent places in all capital cities.

Swami Dayananda holds up the ideal of impartial judicial administration. He writes: "He who violates the law of justice—justice that gives power and prosperity, and showers happiness like rain from heaven—is considered as lowest of the low by the wise."⁴⁶ The Judges are to be appointed by the executive authority. They must be highly learned men. Swami Dayananda is not in favour of complete separation of the executive from the judiciary. He suggests that over each of the ten thousand villages there should be two chief executive officers. One of them is to remain in the provincial capital and another to be on a continuous tour watching the judicial administration of the whole area under his jurisdiction. If the latter finds any instances of miscarriage of justice anywhere, he must award heavy punishment on the officers concerned. The King is given the power of detecting cases of bribery and miscarriage of justice throughout the realm. He is asked to confiscate all the possessions of a person who is found guilty of giving an unjust decision. Such a person is also to be banished to a place from where he can never return. The stern Sannyasin has got no soft corner for the corrupt judges, magistrates and other public administrators. He reiterates that if the corrupt officials go unpunished, others, would feel encouraged to commit similar wicked crimes. Long before the setting up of the Anti-Corruption Department Swami Dayananda required the *inspecting Governor* to have detectives under him for studying the conduct of Government officials.

VIII. Functions of Government

To Swami Dayananda, Government is the agent of the

community. It has not only to provide security against internal and external dangers, but also to promote the highest aims of human life. Some of the functions he entrusts to Government are peculiar. For example, he writes : "It is the duty of the King and other good and learned men to examine all men thoroughly and then place every one of them into one of the four classes—Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra—according to his qualifications and merits."⁴⁷ He cites the authority of Apastamba Sutra in which it is laid down : "A low class man may, by leading a virtuous life rise to the level of a higher class man and should be ranked as such. In the like manner a high class man can by leading a sinful life, sink down to the level of a class lower than his, and should be considered as such." In replying to an objection to the effect that a family may have only one son and if he be taken away from it and entrusted to a different class, the family would die out, Swamiji states that no such thing will happen, "because the State—the Political and Educational Assemblies—will provide them with children of their own class in exchange for their own children, hence, there will be no confusion or chaos in the society."⁴⁸ This practically means that the State takes the responsibility of providing vocational guidance to all children. Swami Dayananda does not give any details regarding the stupendous task of examining the potential capacity and talents of millions of children, uprooting them from their natural families and transplanting them into such ones as have got aptitudes, similar to those of the children concerned. It is doubtful whether any Government is competent enough to carry out such a task satisfactorily.

Absolute equality in the economic condition of the people does not make any appeal to Dayananda. He admits the need of allowing the citizens to hold private property.⁴⁹ He believes in the inequality of the division of wealth but at the same time apprehends that the rich might give trouble to the Government. So he admonishes the rich people never to quarrel with the Government.⁵⁰ The rich are to utilise their wealth in making the life of the poor better and happier.⁵¹

Swami Dayananda lays great emphasis on the maintenance of a strong army. He sees no other way of maintaining

independence of the state than the raising up of a strong defensive force within the country. The professional soldiers alone would not be sufficient for protecting the State against external aggressions. So he advises the government to impart military training to all the subjects. Had Dayananda been a believer in the four-fold caste system with a four-fold division of labour it would not have been possible for him to recommend such a step.

Following the lead of Manu, Swami Dayananda states the function of government to be as follows:—the President and the assembly should try to secure what has not already been gained, to protect that which has been secured, to increase that which has been protected and to utilise the enhanced wealth in disseminating the Vedic knowledge and Dharma, and in supporting the students, religious teachers as well as the disabled and the orphans.⁵² Enhancement of national wealth is, to Dayananda, the primary duty, next in importance only to the safeguarding of independence of the States. He condemns the government which does not look to the increase of national wealth.

The Government, according to him, is the guardian and protector of those who are not able to earn their livelihood either because of disease and infirmity or because they are too young to take care of themselves. Swami Dayananda specially mentions the case of the wife and minor children of the deceased officers who are entitled to the support of the Government. If, however, any of them takes to vicious life, he or she should not receive any help.⁵³

IX. Social Reform

Swami Dayananda hardly makes any distinction between the functions of society and those of Government. He holds that 'it is the duty of the ruler and other responsible persons to see that all the four classes discharge their duties faithfully'.⁵⁴ He entrusts the function of regulating marriage customs to Government. As he is laying down the ideal of national state, he has no hesitation in stating that the Government should make laws with a view to ensuring social happiness. According to him it is the imperative duty of the

State to prohibit early marriage, polygamy and polyandry. He considers the fortieth or even the forty-eighth year as the best time for a man to contract marriage, because according to him, 'the tissues, organs and secretions of the body reach their highest state of perfection' about the fortieth year.⁵⁵ But in no case should a man marry before his twenty-fifth year. In the case of women the lowest permissible age of marriage should be sixteen, and the maximum should not ordinarily exceed twenty-four. This is a surprisingly modern view. The great Sannyasin was far in advance of his time. The credit of starting an agitation for raising the age of marriage is usually given to B. M. Malabari, whose first writing on this subject was published in 1884, that is, one year after the death of Dayananda. If the people of our country take a vow of adhering to the instruction of Swamiji the pressure of population will be relaxed to a considerable extent.

Dayananda was opposed to the arranging of marriage by parents and guardians. He writes: "Even if parents ever think of arranging a match, it should, under no circumstances, ever be done without the consent of their children, for when people choose their partners of life themselves, there is less likelihood of mutual disagreement and the children born of such a union are also of a superior order. There is nothing but trouble in store for those whose marriage is not of their own choice."⁵⁶ This, however, does not mean that Swami Dayananda is in favour of free and unrestricted mixing of young men and women. He lays down a highly cautious procedure. Both the boys and the girls are to have an elaborate course of education during which they are required to follow strictly the rules of *Brahmacharya*. When some six or twelve months are left for the completion of their education and *Brahmacharya*, photographs of boys are to be sent to the Girl's schools, and those of girls to the Boys' schools. The teachers are to find out which of the boys and girls are alike in outward appearance. Then they are required to study their diaries. When the teachers find that a male and a female student resemble each other in disposition, temperament, character and accomplishments they are to place the photo and diary of the two in the hands of each other. If the parties concerned express their willingness to marry they should be allowed to have a talk in the presence of their teachers, parents and

other respectable people. If they have to seek an answer on a private matter, the question may be put in writing and handed over to the other party. The answer would be written then and there privately and passed on to the interrogator in the presence of the assembly. Swami Dayananda, the Sannyasin feels that even under such restrictions love may spring up. He, therefore, states: "As soon as they feel that their love for each other is strong enough to entitle them to marry and have consequently, made up their mind to do so, the very best arrangement should be made with regard to their diet so that their bodies, that had weakened through the practice of rigid discipline and hard life of *Brahmacharya*, and strict devotion to studies, may soon gain in flesh and strength just as the new moon grows into the full moon."⁵⁷ The primary object of marriage is not enjoyment but the production of healthy children for the community. Swami Dayananda considered it permissible for the pair to have the maximum of ten children. He prohibits them to have a larger number.

Manu and other ancient law-givers had no objection to a male person having more than one wife. Manu says that a sharp-tongued wife speaking unpleasant things is to be superseded immediately.⁵⁸ But some of his commentators do not agree with him. Thus Medhatithi, Kulluka and Raghavananda say that harshness of speech is not a serious defect and that it should be forgiven. Then again Manu allows the husband to marry again if his wife is always sick.⁵⁹ But Dayananda does not permit him to do so, though as a concession to the weakness of his flesh he is ready to allow him to contract *Niyoga*.⁶⁰

His fascination for the Vedic culture and civilisation led Swami Dayananda to prescribe *Niyoga*. Neither the prescription of Parasara nor the powerful advocacy of his Bengali contemporary, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, could persuade him to agree to the second marriage of a widow. The utmost concession he would make was that a woman could remarry only if her first marriage had not been consummated. It must be said, however, to the credit of Dayananda that he did not believe in a double standard of morality for men and women. He states: "Remarriage is absolutely prohibited in

the case of a twice-born man or woman (i. e. , one belonging to a *Brahmana*, *Kshatriya*, or *Vaisya class*), who has had sexual intercourse with his or her consent."⁶¹ He adduces four arguments in support of the position he has taken up. The first argument refers really to a case of divorce, and it runs as follows : "Diminution of love between the husband and the wife, since either of them can desert the other whenever he or she so desires, and marry another person." The three other arguments apply to the case of persons whose spouse is dead. He states that "on the death of one party, the other will take away the property of his or her deceased consort when he or she marries again. This will give rise to family disputes. Secondly, if a widow re-marries, many a noble family will be blotted out of existence, and its property destroyed. Lastly, re-marriage involves loss of true conjugal love and infraction of duty towards the departed husband or wife."⁶² The first two arguments are weak. A male Hindu seldom gets a share of his father-in-law's property. The woman who remarries does not get a share of the property of her deceased husband. The third argument might have been accepted as an expression of a high ideal, if the Swamiji had not permitted *Niyoga*.

The distinction between marriage and *Niyoga* is thus explained by him : "(a) A married couple can produce children up to the limit of ten while that connected by *Niyoga* can not produce more than two or four. (b) Just as marriage is allowed only in the case of a bachelor and a maid, likewise only a widow and a widower can enter into the relation of *Niyoga*, but never a bachelor and a maid. (c) A married couple lives together, but not that connected by *Niyoga*. Such persons should come together only when they intend to *generate a new life*. Whether *Niyoga* is contracted for the benefit of the widow or of the widower, the relation is dissolved after the second conception. Let the widow rear the children for two or three years and hand them to her husband by *Niyoga*, in case it has been entered into for his behoof. In this way a widow can give birth to two children for herself and two for each of the four husbands by *Niyoga*. Similarly a widower can beget two children for himself and two for each of the four wives by *Niyoga*. Thus ten children in all can be produced by means of *Niyoga*." He quotes the authority of the Rig Veda (X. 85.45)

in support of his contention. This particular passage says "take unto thyself the eleventh husband by *Niyoga*." Swami Dayananda would not permit the remarriage of a widow with a second husband, though he is ready to connive at her contracting *Niyoga* with as many as eleven persons. He is not prepared to accept Parasara as authoritative. To him *Manu Smriti* is the only authentic text, but even here he considers some of its verses as interpolations.⁶³

X. Ideas on Education

The most fruitful ideas of Swami Dayananda are to be found in the field of education. By taking considerable liberty in interpreting a verse of *Manu* (VII. 152) he quotes it to say : "Both State and Society should make it compulsory upon all to send their children (both male and female) to school after the fifth or eighth year. It should be made a penal offence to keep a child at home after that age."⁶⁴ This great ascetic found that without imparting education compulsorily to all the boys and girls of school-going age it was impossible to revive the glory of India. Long before Gokhale he discovered the supreme necessity of making education compulsory. He knew that mere appeal to the reason or even the sentiment of the people would not make them send their sons and daughters to educational institutions. He, therefore, said that those who would refuse to send their children to schools should be held guilty of the breach of law and consequently punished by law. It may be mentioned in this connection that though primary education has been made compulsory in many cities and towns, yet nowhere has a single case been filed against parents or guardians who have failed to send their wards to schools.

The educational institutions to which Swami Dayananda directs the people to send their children are not to be of the ordinary type. He is not a supporter of co-education. There should be absolutely separate institutions for boys and girls. All the employees of a Girls' school should be women and not even a male child of the age of five should be allowed to enter it. Similar restriction as regards women should be followed in a Boys' school.

The schools are to be residential ones. They are to be situated at a distance of at least five miles from a town or village. Swami Dayananda wants to subject the pupils to a hard course of discipline. He writes: "All the schools should be treated alike in the matter of food, drink, dress, seats etc. Be they princes or princesses or the children of beggars, all should practise asceticism. They should not be allowed to see their parents, or hold any communication whatever with them. Being thus freed from all worldly worries and cares, they should devote themselves heart and soul to their studies. Their tutors should accompany them in all their recreations, so that they may not fall into any mischief, get indolent or naughty."⁶⁵ The reason why he insists on students cutting off all connection with their family during the long years of study is that in case they go home during vacations or write letters to their parents and relatives, their minds would be distracted and they may fall from their ideal of leading an austere life. It is easy for a Sannyasin, who has no attachment whatsoever, to prescribe such a rule but it is difficult for students and their parents to follow it.

There is hardly any greater champion of the rights of women in the nineteenth century than Swami Dayananda. He considers it unjust for a widower to marry a virgin. He insisted on absolute equality for women so far as education was concerned. He did not preclude the women from studying the Vedas. He quotes the following from the Atharva Veda (XI. 16.3.18) : "Just as boys acquire sound knowledge and culture by the practice of *Brahmacharya* and then marry girls of their own choice, who are young, well educated, loving and of like temperament, so should a girl practise *Brahmacharya*, study the Veda and other sciences and thereby perfect her knowledge, refine her character, give her hand to a man of her own choice, who is young, learned and loving." He also shows from the *Satapatha Brahmana* and the *Shrauta Sutra* that women were entitled to read the Vedas and recite the Vedic hymns. He adduces cogent reasons from the social and political points of view for imparting high education to women : "Now if the husband be well-educated and the wife ignorant or *vice versa* there will be a constant state of warfare in the house. Besides if women were not to study, where will

the teachers for Girls' Schools come from? Nor could ever the affairs of the State, the administration of justice, and the duties of married life, that are required of both husband and wife be carried on properly without thorough education (of men and women)."⁶⁶

The period of training in educational institutions covers a period of twenty-two years for men. He takes care to explain that education does not merely mean studying a number of books. He states that education consists of physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual training. Physical training must go side by side with the practising of simple processes of Yoga. "By the increase", he emphasises, "of bodily strength and activity, the intellect becomes so subtle that it can easily grasp the most abstruse and profound subjects."⁶⁷ He requires the students to be familiar with the *Gandharva Veda* or the science of Music. He had no first-hand knowledge of Plato's Republic, in which we find an almost exact parallel to his idea of education. According to Plato Music is expected to generate a growing love of righteousness and if gymnastics is a training of the body for the sake of the mind, music is a direct training of the mind, intended to temper and correct the elements of 'spirit' and to elicit the nascent power of reason. Dayananda requires the students to learn all the different parts of music such as, tunes, modes, modifications of modes, times, harmony and refrain. "They should also learn singing, playing, and dancing, etc., properly, but chiefly singing and playing of the Sama Veda Mantras on musical instruments." He prohibits the students from singing love songs.

The full period of training for a male student covers twenty-two years in the following way:

- (1) Phonetics, Panini's Grammar and Patanjali's *Mahabhasya*—3 years.
- (2) *Nirukta* of Yaska—8 months.
- (3) Prosody by Pingala—4 months.
- (4) Manu-Smriti, Ramayana, and portions of Mahabharata—1 year.
- (5) The six Darsanas and the ten Upanisads—2 years.
- (6) All the four Vedas and Brahmanas—6 years.
- (7) Medical Science—4 years.

- (8) Science of Music, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Geography, Geology and Astronomy—3 years.
- (9) Science of Government—2 years.

He divides this course into two parts—Civil and Military. In the former he includes the art of governing people, protecting their life and property, developing the wealth and resources of the country, making the people happy and contented by the right administration of justice—protecting the good and punishing the wicked. The students are also required to make themselves familiar with different kinds of drills, use of firearms, principles of military organisation, tactics and strategy.

Swami Dayananda thus propounds an ambitious and all-round scheme of education. Whereas the traditional school of thought required one to devote twelve years to the study of Grammar, he allots only three years to the same. It would require a superhuman intellect indeed to master within two years Political Science, Economics and Military Science, both practical and theoretical. He expected the students to learn so many things so quickly because he insisted on their single-minded devotion to studies, to their practice of *Brahmacharya*, and to the quality of teachers.

He lays down that only those persons are qualified to discharge the duties of teachers who are masters of their art and are imbued with piety. He holds that the following categories of persons are incompetent to become teachers—those who enter an assembly or another man's house uninvited, who occupy seats above their rank, talk too much without being asked to, and are credulous by nature.⁶⁸ He holds up the following ideal for teachers and the taught: "The teachers should so endeavour as to produce in their scholars such good qualities as truthfulness in word, deed and thought, culture, self-control, gentleness of disposition, perfect development of mind and body, so that they may become well-versed in the Vedas and Shastras. The teachers should always be diligent in eradicating the evil habits of their scholars and in imparting knowledge. The scholars should always cultivate self-control, mental tranquillity, love for their tutors, thoughtfulness and habits of diligence."⁶⁹ He wanted to train up ideal citizens, who would be able to liberate India from foreign domination.

XI. On Foreign Rule

This was the ultimate object of Swami Dayananda. He believed that from the time of Swayambhuva Manu to that of the Pandavas the Aryas were the paramount power throughout the world.⁷⁰ But with great regret he notes: "At the present moment, let alone governing foreign countries, the Aryas through indolence, negligence, and mutual discord and ill-luck do not possess a free, independent, uninterrupted and fearless rule even over their own country. Whatsoever rule is left to them, is being crushed under the heel of the foreigner. There are only a few independent states left. When a country falls upon evil days, the natives have to bear untold misery and suffering. Say what you will, the indigenous native rule is by far the best. A foreign government, perfectly free from religious prejudices, impartial towards all—the natives and foreigners—kind, beneficent and just to the natives like their parents though it may be, can never render the people perfectly happy. It is extremely difficult to do away with differences in language, religion, education, customs and manners, but without doing that the people can never fully effect mutual good and accomplish their object." Being conscious of the obstacles to the forging of national unity in India, he tried to make Hindi the national language, the Vedas the basis of Indian religion, and the Gurukula training the ideal educational system for our country. An orthodox Hindu Sannyasin named Ala Ram filed a case against him and cited the passage quoted above as an instance of his seditious activity. P. Harrison, the District Magistrate of Allahabad wrote in his verdict: "The general tenour of Dayananda's preaching seems to me to be rather an exhortation to reform, with perhaps a view to the ultimate restoration of the government to native hands. It is practically admitted by Dayananda that there are inherent defects in the qualities of the modern Hindus which disable them from governing themselves."⁷¹

But Swami Dayananda was sure that the British rule could not be permanent. Speaking of the general causes which lead to political changes he wrote: "In this world, over which a just God presides, the rule of the proud, the unjust and the ignorant cannot last very long. It is also a law of

nature that the accumulation of wealth in a community out of all proportion to its needs and requirements brings in its train indolence, jealousy, mutual hatred, lustfulness, luxury, and neglect of duty, which put an end to all sound learning and education, whose place is usurped by evil customs, manners and practices like the use of meat and wine, child marriage and licentiousness. Besides, when people acquire perfection in the military science and the art of war, and the army becomes so formidable that no one in the whole world can stand it on a field of battle, pride and party-spirit increase among them who then become unjust. Thereafter they lose all power either through mutual dissensions, or a strong man from among families of little importance rises to distinction and is powerful enough to subjugate them, just as Shivaji and Govinda Singh rose against the Mohammedan rule and completely annihilated the Mussalman power in India."⁷² In the last sentence he betrays his ignorance of the history of India in the seventeenth century indeed, but he is perfectly right in his diagnosis of the causes of fall of empires. With an unerring instinct Swami Dayananda hits upon the psychological factors which are bound to bring about the fall of a ruling power. He was shrewd enough to hint merely at the eventuality of the loss of power by the British, without directly mentioning them by name. It is noteworthy that long before the rise of the Indian National Congress Swami Dayananda included in the curriculum compulsory military training and the use of fire arms. There is some truth in the allegations made by Valentine Chirol who held Swami Dayananda as a deep-dyed politician aiming at the subversion of British rule. According to him the whole trend of Dayananda's teachings was far less to reform Hinduism than to raise it into active resistance to an alien domination. The British Government considered the Arya Samaj as a potentially dangerous organization till the advent of Mahatma Gandhi. The Arya Samajists made vigorous protests against such allegations and published books and pamphlets to this effect.

Colvin and his subordinates were hostile to the Congress movement in the Uttar Pradesh. As the Arya Samaj of that province sent some delegates to the Allahabad session of the Congress in 1888, the Representative Assembly of the Arya Samajas there passed a resolution on the 29th December,

1888 and added to the bye-laws a clause to the effect that "No Arya Samaj as a body will join any political movement publicly or privately, directly or indirectly." Even a great patriot like Lala Lajpat Rai abstained from attending the Congress between 1890 and 1892. He writes in his autobiography: "When in 1893 the Punjab invited the Congress on the suggestion of Bakshi Jaishi Ram, the Arya Samajists felt great hesitation with his sole exception, the Arya Samajist leaders took no conspicuous part in preparation for the Congress. This was partly due to the fact that the Arya Samajists were preoccupied with internal strife. Some foolish members of the Mahatma Samaj sent letters to officials saying that the leaders of the College section were all at heart anti-government and wanted to use the Samaj for political ends."⁷⁴ It is difficult to ascertain the truth of such allegations. But there can be little doubt that Swami Dayananda was a great patriot, who directed his followers to become worthy citizens of the Indian Republic.

XII. Swami Dayananda and Mahatma Gandhi

Despite some fundamental points of difference between Swami Dayananda and Mahatma Gandhi, the former may be considered as the forerunner of Gandhi and the Morning Star of Indian Independence. Both these great men were born in Saurashtra. Both were valiant fighters, undaunted by reverses and failures. Both held morality and piety to be the very backbone of politics. Both were unwilling to make any compromise with the forces of evil. Swami Dayananda was the first to recognise the importance of Hindi as the *lingua franca* of India. He impressed upon his followers the importance of using Swadeshi goods. Under his influence the Maharaja and all the officials of Jodhpur began to use hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. Like Mahatma Gandhi he held the wealthy people to be the trustees for the poor. Swami Dayananda condemned the caste system based on heredity alone. The task of cooking food was entrusted to the Sudras.⁷⁵ He was prepared to concede a high place in society to a person who happened to be born in a low class. But he was a believer in personal purity. He would not admit to the Arya community a person who are accustomed to take meat and wine.⁷⁶

His followers proved to be strong champions of the untouchables.*

Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Dayananda was a believer in war, conquest and consequently of the use of violence, wherever necessary. He is not at all averse to the increase in one's power. In warfare he advises the war leaders to cut off the enemy's supply of food and water and destroy the reservoirs.⁷⁷ Mahatma Gandhi was reluctant to use violence even under the greatest provocation. He wanted to build up a new India on the basis of friendship and co-operation between the Hindus and Moslems. But Swami Dayananda would have nothing to do with the Moslems. His criticism of their scripture, manners and customs was most virulent. While his contemporary, Ramakrishna Paramahansa was building up an organic synthesis of all the faiths and creeds and Keshab Chandra Sen was singing the glories of Jesus Christ, Swami Dayananda was carrying on a veritable crusade simultaneously against image worship, Pauranic religion, Islam and Christianity. Swami Dayananda has aptly been described as a limb of the church militant.

* The Arya Samaj began to admit Harijans within its fold after performing the *Suddhi*, or purificatory ceremony. Principal Sri Ram Sharma States : "It was when the educational and social services in Baroda had been entrusted to the Arya Samajists that Dr. Ambedkar was sent on a scholarship to England by the Government of the Gaekwad of Baroda. Again it were the Arya Samajists who threw all discretion to the winds at Kottayam in Travancore and challenged the well entrusted tradition of unapproachability by leading a procession of the castes on to the roads which had been closed to them for centuries." (*The Arya Samaj and its impact on Contemporary India*, 1965, p.22).

APPENDIX I

*Extracts from the petition of Members of the British Indian Association and other Native Inhabitants of the Bengal Presidency, complaining for grievances and praying for relief. 1852.**

To—The Right Honourable the Lord Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of the Members of the British Indian Association and other Native Inhabitants of the Bengal Presidency, Sheweth,

That your Petitioners are desirous of bringing to the notice of your Right honourable House the sentiments entertained by themselves and the most intelligent part of their native fellow-subjects all over the country on those points which, in their humble opinion, ought to be taken into consideration at the period of the termination of the Charter, granted to the East India Company by the Act passed in the reign of His late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled, "An Act for effecting an Arrangement with the East India Company and for the better Government of His Majesty's Indian Territories, till the 30th day of April 1854." As subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, the natives of this country entertain the deepest sentiments of loyalty and fidelity to Her Majesty, and sincerely desire the permanence of the British supremacy in India, which has ensured to them freedom from foreign incursions and intestine dissensions, and security from spoliation by lawless power. Placed by the wisdom of Parliament, for a limited time and on certain conditions, under the administration of the East

* Reprinted from the third Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords together with the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index thereto, Session 1852-53.

India Company, they have enjoyed the blessings of an improved form of government, and received many of the advantages incidental to their connexion with one of the greatest and most prosperous nations. They are impressed with a sense of the value and importance of these and similar benefits, and of their obligations to the nation from which they have, under Providence derived them. They cannot but feel, however, that they have not profited by their connexion with Great Britain, to the extent which they had a right to look for. Under the influence of such a feeling, they regarded with deep interest the inquiries conducted by Committees of both Houses of Parliament, between the years 1831 and 1833, preparatory to the passing of the last Charter Act. The fact of such inquiries being on foot, suggestive as it was of great administrative reforms, induced the people, who were unaccustomed to make any demonstration of their sentiments respecting the acts and measures of their rulers to wait the result of the deliberations of the Imperial Parliament.

10. That the union of political or executive power with the legislative is not only anomalous in itself, but pregnant with injury to the interest of the people. It prevents sufficient attention being paid to the internal administration, so that the most important measures which are pressed on the attention of the Government, either receive a superficial consideration or are postponed for indefinite periods. On the other hand, the interests of the Government, or considerations connected with the Court of Directors or the objects of their patronage, are attended to as matters of primary importance, to the neglect or prejudice of the interest of the people, who have no direct mode of representing their sentiments to their rulers, and no reason to be satisfied that their representations will produce their due effect. Your Petitioners therefore submit that the Legislature of India should be a body not only distinct from the persons in whom the political and executive powers are vested, but also possessing a popular character so as in some respects to represent the sentiments of the people and to be so looked upon by them.

11. That it is a most unprecedented circumstance that though the natives of India have, for the best part of a

century, been subjects of the Crown of Great Britain they have not, to this day, been admitted to the smallest share in the administration of the affairs of their country, but have

Laws are now continued under a Government that unites
made by the in itself the legislative and executive functions,
Executive. and avails itself of those powers to make

such laws as may subserve its own financial purposes, often without reference to the interests and wishes of the people. It is known to your Right Honourable House that, from the commencement of that Government, the power of making laws and raising taxes has been exclusively in the hands of the Governor-General in Council, appointed by the Court of Directors, and that, till within a few years, the people knew nothing of the intention to pass laws till after they had been passed and translation sent to the courts in the interior and that though at present it is the practice to publish drafts of intended laws, yet as there are no organized bodies to take their provisions into consideration, such publication is in almost all cases wholly insufficient. Moreover the deliberations of the legislature are carried on with closed doors, and the people have no opportunity, either of learning the grounds on which the laws are enacted, or of being heard by counsel when desirous of submitting their remonstrances.

12. That not only are laws enacted without reference to the people, but they are enforced against the strongest complaints and remonstrances. Thus in violation of the

No attention
paid to re-
monstrances.

pledge given by the Regulation XIX of 1793, "That the claims of the public (meaning the Government) on their lands, provided they register the grants as required, shall be tried in the Courts of Judicature, that no such exempted lands may be adjudged to the payment of revenue until the titles of the proprietor shall have been adjudged invalid by a final judicial decree," a new species of court was created by the Regulation III of 1828, which was presided over by the collectors of revenue, officers who were every respect unqualified for the judicial office, but whose orders, when confirmed by one or more of the special commissioners, another special tribunal at the same time erected, were declared to be final, contrary to the meaning and intent of

the 21st section of 21st Geo. 3, c. 70. But though several petitions were at the time presented to the Government from several parts of the country, complaining of the innovation, as well as of the hardship of the resumption proceedings which were carried on under the orders of the Government, no attention was paid to them, nor was any explanation vouchsafed as to the grounds of the law or the justice of the proceedings. From the Appendix to the Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company, printed in 1832, your petitioners find that the Government, in reporting on the subject on the 23rd February, 1830 to the Court of Directors, "to whom alone," as they state, "they felt it incumbent on them fully to explain the grounds of their proceedings," remarked, "that to object to the inquiry and award of a collector on the ground that he is a Government officer, and must therefore be a partial judge, was a mere prejudice." The Court of Directors, in their reply of the 28th September, 1831, your petitioners find, informed the Government that, after full consideration, they had "come to the conclusion that collectors should not be the judges in resumption questions;" but they gave no orders to rescind the objectionable law. From these facts, which are especially alluded to, because the proceedings of the authorities therein have been published, it will be apparent to your Right Honourable House that even the power given to the Court of Directors to disallow laws passed by the Government, is inefficacious even as regards such laws as are contrary to all sound rules of policy.

13. That as a further example of the inattention of the Government to remonstrances, even when violating (to use the terms of the Charter Act of 1813), "the principles of the british Government on which the natives of India have hitherto relied for the Act XXI of 1850, which, under the guise of extending the principle of section 9, Regulation VII of 1832 of the Bengal Code to the other presidencies, the provisions of which had never come into operation, alters the rules of inheritance of the people of this country, which are well-known to be based upon their religious tenets, by allowing persons excluded from caste, whether on account of immoral or infamous conduct, or of change of religion, to

inherit, contrary to the express rules of the Hindoo law. On learning the intentions of the Government, many of the people of Bengal and Madras united to remonstrate against it, on the ground of the guarantee given them that their laws and customs should be respected, and of its being the tendency if not the design of the intended law to facilitate proselytism to other religions. But these remonstrances were not even noticed by the Government, although sound policy and pledges given to the people required that alteration should be made in the rules of inheritance without their consent, especially when it could not be asserted that any public inconvenience had attended the operation of those rules.

14. That for these and other reasons too numerous to be detailed, your petitioners consider the power of making laws and raising taxes conferred exclusively on the Governor-General Council, to be impolitic as well as unjust to the native subjects of the British Crown, even with the reservation of the power of disallowing laws made by them, which has been vested by the Charter Act in the Court of Directors. Hence they are desirous that the legislature of British India be placed on the footing of those enjoyed by most of the colonies of Her Majesty, and that legislation be carried on with open doors, so that the people may have full knowledge of the proceedings, and an assurance that their wants and interests will not fail to be cared for. They accordingly submit, for the consideration of your Right Honourable House, the propriety of constituting a Legislative Council at Calcutta, composed of 17 members, three selected from among the most respectable and qualified native inhabitants of each presidency, to represent the natives thereof; one member appointed by the Governor of each presidency from among the senior civil officers on its establishment, to represent the interests of the Government; and one member appointed by the Crown, in the same manner as the fourth ordinary member of Council is now appointed, who shall be a man of legal education, and preside over the Council. The members of the Council should continue in office for five years, during which time they

should hold no other office under Government. To ensure their acting independently of the influence of the Government, they should not be removable even by the Crown, as under section 74 of the Charter Act, the servants of the Company are removable at will by the Crown; but any member who may be accused of misconduct may be liable to prosecution in the criminal court. The members should receive, during their continuance in office, honorary distinctions, such as are given to members of legislative bodies in Great Britain and the colonies, besides a reasonable salary. Until the people are considered qualified to exercise the right of electing their own delegates to the Legislative Council, the native members may be nominated by the Governor-General, in communication with the Governors of the several presidencies; but certain rules may, at the same time, be framed, by which the people of any presidency or province may have the power of objecting on specified grounds to any appointment so made, for which purpose the appointments should be notified in the English and vernacular gazettes of the presidencies. The law commission, Abolition of Law Commission. which was established by sections 53, 54 and 55 of the Charter Act should be abolished, as the purposes for which it was appointed will be fulfilled by a Legislative Council formed on the comprehensive basis herein suggested.

15. That in the event of the formation of a Legislative Council, distinct from and independent of the executive, being approved by your Right Honourable House, your petitioners submit that that body should Powers of the Legislative Council and the Supreme Council. have the same powers in regard to the proposing, making and cancelling of laws as are now vested in the governor-General and the four ordinary members of Council, but that the laws framed by them should be submitted to the Supreme Government for confirmation. The Governor-General in Council and the Governors of the presidencies, as well as any portion of the people by petition, should have the power of proposing drafts of laws to the Legislative Council, in the manner and on the conditions prescribed with respect to Governors, by section 66 of the Charter Act, that is to say

that the authorities named may propose drafts or projects of laws, with their reasons for proposing the same, and that the Legislative Council shall take the same and such reasons into consideration, and communicate their resolutions thereon to the authorities by whom the same shall have been proposed. The laws which may be framed by the Legislative Council should be submitted to the Supreme Council, with all the documents on which they may be based, or which may elucidate their object and tendency, and should receive the early attention of that Council; and as all the preliminary inquiries will have been made by the Legislative Council, and great weight will be due to their opinions as representing the interests of the whole community, it will not be improper to require that the Governor-General in Council should communicate his sentiments thereon, within three months from the time they are submitted to him, or that on the lapse of that period his concurrence should be implied, except in the case of his previously informing the Legislative Council of his inability to come to a conclusion within that period. Whenever the laws so framed and submitted are disallowed by the Governor-General in Council the grounds of disallowance are to be communicated to the Legislative Council, and that body are to have liberty to move the Imperial Parliament to pass the laws in question.

16. That the power conferred on the Court of Directors by section 44 of the Charter Act, to rescind any laws passed by the present Legislative Council, is inconsistent with the independence and dignity of a legislative body. Your petitioners
 Council of
 Parliament. submit that such power should in any case be taken away, and that the laws framed by the Legislative Council and approved by the Supreme Council in the plan above suggested, should not be liable to repeal or alteration, save by the paramount authority of Parliament. But if any Bill be brought in Parliament to repeal any act of the Legislature of India, or make a new law on any point affecting the inhabitants of India, 12 months' notice thereof should be given, to allow the Legislative Council, or any portion of the people, to take measures for being heard by counsel, at the bar of both Houses, on the subject of the Bill.

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20. That all improvements in the administration, however urgently called for, are now postponed, on the ground of insufficiency of resources. It is also generally admitted, by all persons qualified to judge of the subject that the higher offices in India are too highly paid, but the lower ones very inadequately. Your petitioners submit Economy in the therefore, without raising any question as to Public Service. the method in which the revenues of the country are applied although such question is not unworthy the attention of your Right Honourable House, that there should be a reduction of the salaries of the higher offices, and that the saving thereby effected should, in part, be applied to the increase of the allowances of the lower, which are confessedly inadequate to their duties and responsibilities, and, in part, to those improvements which the condition of the country has long demanded at the hands of its rulers. The salaries of the Governor-General, the members of Council, the local Governor, and the principal covenanted officers, are on an exorbitant scale, and susceptible of great reduction without impairing the efficiency of the service. The Governor-General in addition to his munificent salary, has all his travelling expenses to an enormous amount, paid out of the public treasury, without control or responsibility. Such a state of things may fairly be thought to operate as an inducement to the individual holding the office to leave the seat of government without sufficient reason. It seems, therefore, expedient, that the Governor-General should not have his travelling expenses paid out of the treasury, without limit or restriction, but according to fixed rules, and that such allowances should be granted only when it may appear, from a resolution of the members of Council, that his presence is required by the exigencies of the state at a distance from the seat of Government. Much public treasure is also expended, without any corresponding advantage, in paying extravagant salaries to Residents in the courts of the Princes of India and other political officers, and to a large staff of assistants, and in granting large allowances to those offices for keeping a table, and other useless purposes. As the inhabitants of the country who contribute towards the revenue which is thus lavishly

expended derive on benefit therefrom, it is just and proper that the opportunity should be taken to introduce an unsparing economy in these and other branches of the public services, and to apply the proceeds to those public works which may promote free intercourse between distant places, and facilitate the transport of merchandise to the farthest extremities of the British dominions.

26. That the criminal courts of the Company are those of the magistrates and the sessions judges. The former act in the double capacity of superintendents of police and judges of cases not liable to a sentence exceeding three years' imprisonment. In the former capacity they have been Criminal Courts. acknowledged by their superiors to have a strong leaning towards the conviction of those who are brought before them for trial. In the latter capacity they are authorised, in certain cases, even to adjudge imprisonment and fine without appeal, and in general they exercise, according to the admissions of high authorities, powers which are not committed to magistrates in any civilized country, and for which they are disqualified by their youth and inexperience.

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31. That the monopoly of the salt trade by the Company injuriously affects the poor, particularly those who inhabit the districts where only that manufacture can be advantageously carried on, as it interferes with their freedom of action and prevents saline lands, which are unfit for Monopolies. cultivation, from being appropriated by the owners to the manufacture of salt. Even the zemindars of such places and liable to severe fines, if unauthorised manufactures of salt are discovered on their estates, though unknown to them, so that they are compelled to acts as revenue guards. A single zemindar has been known to be fined as much as 12,000 rupees at once. The selling price of salt is arbitrarily fixed by the Government, and is at all times so high that, though the country has abundant resources for the manufacture of the article, English merchants can afford to import it. The dearness of the article induces even those who live near the salt manufactures to use earth scraped from salt lands, while those who reside in the interior

have recourse to the alkali found in the ashes of burnt vegetables. The officers employed in the salt department are vested with judicial powers, contrary to all principles of justice and policy and necessarily employ them very irregularly and vexatiously. The subordinate officers are furnished with opportunities, on pretence of preventing smuggling, of harassing the carriers of salt and the refiners of saltpetre. Your petitioners are of opinion that, among other reforms required in this department, it is desirable that the Government, if they cannot immediately afford to forego so odious a source of revenue, should fix an unvarying rate of impost on the manufacture of salt, say 200 rupees on every hundred maunds whereby not only the poor will be greatly benefitted, but the laws will be rid of the anomaly of judicial excisemen and the traders of the harassment caused by the subordinate officers of salt chowkees. But as salt is a necessary of life, the duty on salt should be entirely taken off as soon as possible. The monopoly of the opium trade is not injurious to the country, so far as regards the revenue realised by the Government, as the monopoly price is ultimately paid by the consumers in China. But it is a source of vexation to the cultivators, who are compelled to cultivate the poppy, and supply the produce to the Government, at the valuation fixed by their own officers. Nor can it be otherwise than that the cultivators should be at a disadvantage, and be liable to oppression, when the other contracting party is armed with all the power and resources of the state. Justice, therefore, requires that the interference of the Government with the cultivation should cease, and that the revenue derived from the drug should be in the shape of fixed duties on manufacture and exportation, but principally on the latter as is in some measure the case with regard to Malwa opium. By the adoption of this principle, the cultivators will possess that freedom of action which all men possess under governments that are not constituted on arbitrary and despotic principles; and whatever is lost by such an arrangements, will be more than made up by the saving that will ensue from the abolition of the expensive establishments which are now necessary.

32. That the *abkaree* duties, or revenue raised from the sale of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs, and the

stamp duties, levied by obliging litigants and complainants to write their petitions on stamped papers, are highly objectionable in principle. The former are levied on the opening of shops for the retail of the means of intoxication, and tend to encourage the consumption of liquors and drugs by the lower classes, and the increase of all the pernicious consequences that result from it. The Government, by appointing commissioners of abkaree and a host of ambulant subordinates, termed superintendents of abkaree, whose zeal for the interests of their masters is measured by the amount of revenue yielded by their respective divisions, have, of late, largely contributed to the deterioration of the moral and industrial character of a portion of the population. Measures so pernicious cannot be too severely condemned or too soon discontinued even though a large revenue were to be derived therefrom than is really the case. The legitimate purposes for which duties are imposed on the sale of liquors and drugs, will be sufficiently answered by imposing them on manufacture or exportation. The stamp laws, by which the other class of duties is imposed, also require material revision. The use of stamps in judicial matters does not answer the object for which they are avowedly imposed, namely, the diminution of litigation. On the contrary, they contribute to prolong litigation, as they involve on the courts, from the lowest to the highest, the duty of deciding points extraneous to the merits of the suits before them. For the purpose of the stamp revenue, every suit has to be valued according to certain rules laid down by the legislature, the application of which is liable to much doubt and uncertainty. Hence questions are frequently raised as to the observance of those rules, and the decisions of the Courts of First Instance are subject to appeals to the higher tribunals; and many suits are nonsuited or remanded for retrial, merely because the amount of the stamp has not been correctly estimated, however honestly the plaintiff may have formed that estimate. In some cases, when the plaintiffs would willingly forego a portion of his claim, which may not stand on so clear a foundation as the rest, he is afraid to do so, lest his suit be altogether defeated by the objection that he has undervalued his claim, and that his stamp is therefore defective. The decisions of the Superior Court in the matter of stamps are not unvarying, and many constructions and

circulars are issued to regulate the questions which arise, which are often modified or rescinded, circumstances which greatly distract and embarrass pleaders and judges in deciding such questions. And it may be fairly stated that not less than 10 per cent of the decisions of the Company's courts turn entirely on considerations connected with this most absurd and injudicious system of raising a revenue. The operation of the stamp laws is still more directly injurious to a revenue. The operation of the stamp laws is still more directly injurious to the poorer classes in their pursuit of justice. Before they can prosecute a suit of any kind, they must not only incur the ordinary expenses of other courts, but also lay out, at the very outset, a certain sum in the purchase of a stamped paper, which in the most trifling case is a rupee, or eight times the daily hire of a labourer. Your Petitioners submit that laws of this description should not be permitted to exist. If a revenue from judicial proceedings be necessary, it may, with propriety, be drawn from those who maintain vexation or groundless claims, or resist just ones, by imposing on them fines calculated on the scale of the present stamp law.

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36. That the provisions in section 89 and other sections of the Charter Act, for providing an ecclesiastical establishment expressly for the advantage of British subjects, are out of place among the arrangements for the government of British India. That government is for a mixed community the

Ecclesiastical establishment. members of which are of various and opposite sects, and the majority is composed of Hindus and Mahomedans. It is therefore manifestly

inexpedient that the Government should have any connection with the appointment of the ministers of any religion. All sects should accordingly be left to support the ministers of their respective religions in the manner they deem most suitable. Your Petitioners do not object to the appointment of chaplains to the European regiments that are sent out to this country, as is done in the United Kingdom, nor to the appointment of a chaplain-general in each presidency for the government of the chaplains, but to support of bishops and other highly paid functionaries, out of the general revenues

of the country, for the benefit of a small body of British subjects. They submit, accordingly, for the consideration of your Right Honourable House, the expediency of discontinuing the connection of the Government with the ecclesiastical establishment; and in order that this may be done at an early date, they suggest that the cost of these establishments be charged to those civil and military servants at each presidency town or station who enjoy the benefit thereof; and that an increase be made to the allowances of those servants to enable them to meet the additional expense imposed on them by this arrangement, but without being continued to their successors, who should be left to bear this expense among others incidental to their position in this country.

Your Petitioners, having thus briefly enumerated the points which they deem worthy of the consideration of your Right Honourable House, in connection with the Charter of the East India Company, now on the eve of expiry, and which, as far as they depend on questions of fact, they are prepared to support by evidence whenever required, humbly pray that your Right Honourable House will be pleased to make such arrangements for the government of British India, as to your wisdom and justice may seem fit.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

APPENDIX II

Extracts from the Second petition of the Madras Native Association and others 1852*

The humble Petition of the Madras Native Association, and other Native Inhabitants of the Presidency of Madras.

10. That your petitioners have already requested the continuance of the councils at the minor presidencies, and they now respectfully reiterate their prayer to have them constituted on the precedent of the council on the island of Ceylon, in which your petitioners' countrymen have enjoyed seats for a series of years; and, as your petitioners understand that constitutions have been, or are on the eve of being, granted to the settlements of the Cape of Good Hope and New Zealand, admitting the natives there to the same electoral and municipal privileges as the European colonists, they humbly and anxiously trust that your Honourable House will not deem the barbarians of the former, and the cannibals of the latter colony more deserving or more fitting to be entrusted with a share in the management of their own affairs, then the inhabitants of a country which for scores of centuries has been renowned throughout the world for its civilisations, literature, and commerce, and which had its own sovereigns, governments, and codes of law, long before the English nation had a name in history.

11. That, while your petitioners acknowledge and have asked for the advantage of a reconstruction and improvement of the home and local administration of India, yet that alone will be of no avail to redress the grievances and reform the abuses of the local governments, so long as they are composed of two or three Company's officials, legislating in the utmost secrecy, and concealing with the most assiduous carefulness the whole of their transactions, secure not only from all

* Fifth Report from the Select Committee on Indian Territories 14th July, 1853, No. 768. Appendix No, 3. p. 122.

check, but from the least shadow of knowledge on the part of the people, whose interests are unfortunately considered of not the slightest consequence to the Government whose duty it is to legislate for their sole benefit.

12. That your petitioners will consider themselves and their community deeply humiliated and deeply aggrieved, if, after the open acknowledgements of persons high in office in this country and in England, that they are as capable to hold responsible employments as the members of the now exclusive civil service; that they are their equals on the bench, and successful competitors in the study of European arts, science, and literature, they are longer shut out from the offices for which they are confessedly qualified, while the savage Hottentot and New Zealander are preferred before them.

13. That your petitioners finally conclude with the expression of their earnest hope and prayer that sufficient time may be granted for a thorough inquiry into all points affecting the welfare of this country, as distributed under the eight heads laid down by the Committee of your Honourable House; that the local councils may be retained, and modelled upon the constitutional principle before adverted to; and that a Royal Commission, composed of Europeans and natives conjointly, chosen partly in Europe and partly in India, may be issued, to enter upon and complete the necessary investigation in this country.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray,
&c.

T. Auroommogavy

V. Somasoondram

S. Namasevogum

Madras, 21 May 1853.

&c. &c. &c.

APPENDIX III.

Petition of the Members of the Bombay Association and others in 1853*

The humbler Petition of the Members of the Bombay Association, and others Native Inhabitants of the Presidency of Bombay.

6. Your petitioners rejoice to learn that an interest and a spirit of inquiry respecting Indian affairs have lately arisen in England, which have led to a mass of valuable information being placed before the public of a nature that would never have reached your Honourable House from official lips, but which, nevertheless, your petitioners would respectfully remark, deserves the utmost attention of your Honourable House, though it may form no part of the evidence collected by the Committee of your Honourable House, and may not be adverted to in their Reports. Your petitioners may refer to many valuable papers published by highly competent persons now in England very antagonistic to the interests of the East India Company, whose names therefore your petitioners do not find amongst the persons summoned before the Committee to give evidence on Indian affairs; and they beg also to attract the attention of your Honourable House to a very valuable and instructive work recently published at Madras on the administration of justice in that presidency, by George Bruce Norton, Esq., barrister-at-law. As this gentleman is now at Madras, and cannot be examined in England your petitioners have taken the liberty of annexing a copy of this work to their petition, in the hope that your Honourable House will allow them, in this form, the benefit of that gentleman's testimony to the character of the administration of justice in Southern India—testimony which,

* Extracts from the Appendix to the Fifth Report from the Select Committee on Indian Territories, July 1853 pp. 132.35. (No. 768).

however startling, is nevertheless unimpeachable, being based on the decisions of the courts themselves; and your petitioners regret to add that the courts of the East India Company in this presidency are on no better footing as regards judicial fitness and capacity than those of Madras.

7. Your petitioners are sensible that many of the evils which have hitherto retarded progress in India can only be remedied through the medium of efficient and properly constituted local governments, and they look with confidence to your Honourable House giving this head of inquiry the fullest consideration.

8. Your petitioners, speaking of the government of their own presidency, though they believe the remark to be equally true of the other Indian Governments, are of opinion that it is quite unequal to the efficient discharge of its duties, and that nothing but the impenetrable veil of secrecy with which even its most trivial acts are covered protects it from universal condemnation.

9. It consists of a Governor, a Commander-in-Chief and two civil servants as members of council. The business is conducted primarily by four secretaries and two deputy-secretaries; each secretary having a separate department of his own, and being in that the adviser of the Governor, the latter, who, generally speaking, is without local knowledge or experience, is obviously in the hands of the secretaries, and, for the most part, from the mass of business to be despatched, compelled to adopt the minutes they place before him.

10. The Commander-in-Chief, having the affairs of the army to attend to, and not caring to trouble himself with the civil affairs of the presidency, with which he cannot be expected to be in the least degree acquainted, spends more than half his time away from the seat of government, and enters the council apparently merely to record his assent to the minutes of the Governor. It has been stated in evidence before the Committee of your Honourable House, that it often happens that eight or ten boxes full of papers on revenue and judicial matters are sent to the Commander-in-Chief at one time, and that they have been returned from his house

to the other members of the Government perhaps within one hour, allowing merely time for him to put his initials; and your petitioners believe that it ever has been the case that the Commander-in-Chief, though knowing nothing of the subjects in hand, have felt it their duty invariably to vote with the Governors.

11. The civil members of council are not selected from the most able and distinguished of the servants of Government, though there have been some remarkable exceptions. The appointment is in the gift of the Court of Directors, and is always bestowed on some one of the senior members of the service about to close their Indian career. It is consequently canvassed for in Leadenhall-street, and falls to the lot of him who can command the greatest amount of personal interest with the members of the court individually. A vacancy occurring but rarely, few members of the civil service can fill the appointment, and its gift is thus a matter of favour. They have no specific duties to discharge, and little or no responsibility, and, as they may always be outvoted by the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief, they can scarcely be expected to take any prominent part in the current affairs of Government; indeed, to give any very effective assistance, unless something out of the usual routine, or within the line of their past experience, should arise to excite their interest. The evil tendency of their position is, that, having no defined duty as a part of the Government, their own brief minutes, or their signatures, often put for the sake of conformity to those of others, carry with them a weight to higher authority which should only attach to opinions deliberately formed, and the result of careful inquiry, made under official responsibility. The practical effect of a Government so constituted is, that, for the most part, each secretary in his own department is the Governor in Council. The Secretaries, with one exception, selected from the civil service, and generally, though not invariably, from its most able members, having passed their lives from boyhood on some one or more of the subordinate agencies of Government, are suddenly called upon to discharge the most onerous and important duties, for many of which their previous training does not at all qualify them. Questions requiring for their solution correct knowledge of the principles

of finance, of political economy, of the systems of the country and of other countries, involving the rights and just expectations of classes of persons, and the cases and privileges of individuals with lighter matters, crowded in rapid succession on them, and must be disposed of; and, however able and conscientious they may be, they have not the time to go through with due care and attention, nor very frequently with the knowledge of the subject requisite to enable them properly to despatch the multifarious matters with which they are loaded. Government being thus undermanned is necessarily compelled to throw off as much of its own duties as possible on the local officers, to act on their report as unimpeachable, and to shroud them in secrecy. The European local officers, on the other hand, scattered over the country at great distances from one another, and having large districts to attend to far beyond their powers of supervision, and dependent to a very great degree on their subordinates, are compelled to dispose of the greater part of their business in a very imperfect manner; and their statements to Government, whether emanating from persons who it is known may be trusted, or from those in whose accuracy Government are aware no confidence can be placed, are on system accepted as equally trustworthy, and the official vindication of the acts of Government founded thereon. The necessary result of this system is, that the Government is one of first impressions; that, short-handed as it is under the present system, its chief difficulty and its main object is to keep down and despatch business; to despatch it well if possible, but at all events to prevent accumulating; that hasty superficial reports of local officers are in regulating the conduct of Government, except on questions of money, of equal weight with those the result of care and reflection. It is obviously necessary, therefore, to protect the acts of such a Government from public scrutiny and supervision, in order to preserve for it public respect; and the most rigid secrecy is consequently preserved in every department. So strictly is this enforced, that the members of the civil service are all under solemn oaths not to reveal anything connected with the business before them; and the Court of Directors have, even in modern days, noticed with severe disapprobation the publication of a very small portion of one of their

despatches by, as it was supposed, a member of the civil service, relating to a suit at law with which he had been connected judicially. The same amount of secrecy is preserved in everything that comes before Government, whether it relates to a purely municipal matter, the establishment of a sailors' home, a principality, a jaghere, the conduct of a public officer, or hardship practised towards an individual; and even where wrongs or injury are complained of by a large class of persons, or where merely private property is at stake, or the character and prospects of an individual are involved, still the same system prevails. If the parties against whom unfavourable reports have been transmitted by the local officers apply for copies, they are always refused. Not the slightest opportunity is afforded them of correcting any misstatements that may have been made in these reports, and there consequently is, naturally ever must be, a great inducement to resort to unfair means to procure that information from the records of Government which cannot be fairly obtained, but to which all the parties concerned are justly entitled; and which, on system merely, is withheld from them. The inevitable effect of this system is, that, individual cases occupying a large portion of the time of Government, the most cruel injustice, even with the best intention, is done. The individual concerned may have had a volume written against him behind his back, written with all the easy confidence of those who know that their statements will not be handed over to the party interested to reply to; and when the presidency authorities consider matters sufficiently ripe, a few paragraphs disclosing a small fragment of the case recorded against him— a tithe only of what he ought to be allowed to answer and explain is sent to him for such observations as he may desire to offer, and on his reply to these he is adjudged. It is difficult to exaggerate, or on any more general view fully to display the vicious operation of this system of Government. But it will be obvious to our Honourable House that, as a system, it is the very worst that could be devised, and the very last which good sense would indicate as adopted to strengthen British rule in India, by giving it a hold on the affections of the people; on the contrary its obvious tendency is to engender and perpetuate amongst the young servants of Government an illiberal and despotic

tone to give full scope to the prejudices, the ignorance, and the self-sufficiency of all; to discourage progress, to discountenance all schemes of improvement emanating from independent and disinterested sources, and not within the views of the officer to whose department they are referred; and to cramp all agricultural and commercial energy, all individual enterprise.

12. Your petitioners therefore humbly entreat your Honourable House, in any new legislation which may be framed for India to abolish councils as at present constituted, and in their place to create an useful and efficient council, of which the judges of the Supreme Court, in judicial and legislative matters, and some of the European and native citizens, should form a part. Also to put an end to that injurious system of secrecy which at present is the ruling principle of voice in the Indian administration, and to allow the council to call for the proceedings of Government and its local officers, except in cases in which the executive shall declare that state policy requires should be preserved. Your petitioners further ask, that on questions of great importance to individuals and classes of persons coming up for the decision of Government, the valuable privilege of being heard by counsel be conceded to those who may be desirous of availing themselves of it in support of their interest. With these measures your petitioners believe that it would be absolutely necessary to strengthen the hands of the executive Government; and that it would be highly desirable that there should always be among the more prominent members some persons trained and experienced in the public offices of England, who can bring to the consideration of public affairs a more extended knowledge and wider views than are to be expected from those European gentlemen who have passed all their days from boyhood in the bad systems of this country, and know no other by which to compare and improve them.

13. Your petitioners forbear to trouble your Honourable House with the details of such a change, which are of easy construction if its propriety be once acknowledged; and they equally wish to avoid repeating what they have put forth in their former memorial, already as they believe, referred to

the Committee on Indian Affairs; but they are anxious to recall the attention of your Honourable House to that narrow and injurious system which gives to those educated at Haileybury College a Parliamentary right to supply the vacancies in the civil establishments of India. Your petitioners believe that the existence of this exclusive service, bound together like the members of one family, is incompatible with a more open council and an efficient and responsible discharge of public duties. At present the natives of this country, however, respectable, trustworthy, and qualified they may be, are excluded from the higher grade of judicial and revenue situations and from the regular medical service, to which covenanted European servants sent out from England are alone appointed; such exclusion being impolitic, unjust, and contrary to the letter and spirit of the 87th section of the Charter Act of 1834. Your petitioners respectfully reiterate their prayer that the invidious and unjustifiable distinction between the covenanted and uncovenanted services, which excludes the natives from the higher offices, be abolished, and that natives of India may be allowed to fill all situations for which they may be qualified. By the adoption and practical operation of such a measure, a great stimulus will, your petitioners feel convinced, be given to the cause of education and improvement in this country; a great deal of discontent will be removed, and inefficiency will be obviated. It is placed beyond controversy by the testimony of official reports published by the local Governments, that the Grant Medical College at Bombay and the Medical College at Calcutta are admitted to have recently produced as proficient and competent native surgeons and physicians as those sent out from England under covenants.* Instead of admitting any of the successful candidates into the regular medical service of Government, a new and distinct service has been created for them by the Indian Governments, the rank and emoluments

* Vide Appendix (0) to the Report of the Grant Medical College for 1850-51. Dr. M'Lennan, Government Examiner and Physician-General, has publicly certified, that "as far as examinations can test fitness for engagement in medical and surgical practice, graduates of the Grant Medical College have proved their fitness to as great a degree as I believe is ever done in Europe."

of which are considerably inferior, a course which is calculated to lower this new medical service in the estimation of the public, and to perpetuate the distinction that has hitherto been preserved between native and European agency, or uncovenanted and covenanted servants of Government. So rigidly is the line of separation preserved, that a native of India, named Dr. Chukerbutty, who recently left Calcutta to finish his medical education in England, where he greatly distinguished himself and obtained the highest testimonials of proficiency, although recommended for an appointment as an assistant-surgeon in the East India Company's medical service by the Right Honourable Sir Edward Ryan and Mr. Cameron, gentlemen of eminent consideration for their past services, was, your petitioners are informed, refused admission into the covenanted medical service by the Court of Directors collectively and individually.

14. Your petitioners cannot take leave of this important subject without the favourable attention of Parliament to the suggestion made in their former petition with regard to the advisability of establishing a university or college, as proposed by that able and experienced servant of Government, Mr. Cameron, for the purpose of qualifying the natives for government employ, of imparting profound and thorough judicial knowledge to native candidates for the bench, and of training up a superior and independent class of vakeels or pleaders, who would elevate the character of the native bar, and be of great service in the efficient administration of justice in this country.

15. Your petitioners would further ask that, as regards the European servants of Government, a distinction, commencing in England and preserved throughout, may be made between those who are destined to fill judicial offices in India and the executive officers of the Government, and that the former may be withdrawn from the operation of personal favour and individual patronage, and be selected, like the judges in England, for their own merits and acquirements.

16. Your petitioners believe that if, whilst opening the highest judicial offices to the natives of this country, and fairly apportioning them between qualified natives and their European fellow subjects, the office of zillah judge were

thrown open to gentlemen of legal education; if no one were permitted to leave England for this purpose until 26 years of age; if a public committee composed of four members named by the four inns of the Court and two members by the Home Government, were appointed half-yearly to examine the candidates, selecting from them so many only as, according to the computed vacancies, were then required; if the course of examination, besides comprehending a knowledge of selected portions of the English substantive law, embraced the general principles of jurisprudence, the law and constitution of India, and its modern history, a class of most able public servants to fill the office of zillah judge, and the higher grade, would be selected; and that a certain probation in India, ending with an examination of the candidates, in native language, in the Hindoo and Mahomedan code, the local regulations, the tenures and customs of the country, would complete an education, and produce an efficiency, which would render the court of justice a blessing to the county that would be heartily and gratefully acknowledged throughout the length and breadth of the land; and appellate courts so constituted would ensure to the English Government the firmest hold on the affections and interest of the people.

17. Your petitioners in their former memorial drew the attention of your Honourable House to the correspondence between the Board of Control and the Directors of the East India Company, contained in the 17th volume of the "Papers (printed in 1833, by order of the Court of Directors) respecting the negotiation with Her Majesty's Ministers on the subject of the East India Company's Charter"; and, although well aware from that correspondence that they might justly have asked your Honourable House to discontinue the practice of periodically legislating for India, a practice exclusively connected with the rights and privileges of the East India Company put an end to by the arrangements made with them in 1833, still your petitioners, not foreseeing the chance of arousing the interest and attention now bestowed on Indian affairs, petitioned your Honourable House to limit the period of existence of any future government of India to 10 years; but your petitioners are now emboldened to ask your Honourable House as recently recommended..... by the Right Honourable Lord Broughton not to debar them for any

period of years from requesting a revision of what may be injurious in the coming Indian legislation, not to make them an exception to all British subjects in the distant colonies of the British Empire, who have all along been in the enjoyment of the privilege of approaching Parliament whenever the affairs of the colony have required imperial interference. It is simply necessary, Lord Broughton declared, to pass an Act providing for the best form of Government both in England and in India, without limiting its duration to any number of years, an Act which, like any other statute, might, if deemed requisite, be modified, altered, or repealed as occasion might require; and, carrying out the same principles still further, your petitioners would respectfully observe that it cannot be necessary to embrace all the subjects involved in the discussion of India in one Act, and that the constitution of the Home Government, the constitution and powers of the several local Governments, the construction of a new judicial service, and each independent branch of inquiry, if made the subject of separate legislation, would in all probability receive more careful attention and be more satisfactorily disposed of, than if the entire mass of Indian information be gathered together in one, and thrown into a single enactment.

18. Your petitioners therefore humbly pray your Honourable House, that this petition, like their former memorial, may be referred to the Committee now sitting on Indian Affairs, with a direction to them to have regard to its contents on any measures of legislation which the Committee may propose to Parliament; and that your Honourable House will be pleased, if necessary, to cause Commissions to issue to disinterested and independent persons at the three presidencies, to collect evidence in India as to the practical working of the systems of Government in operation, and that such Committees may be authorised to examine all Government servants, of whatever rank, and to require the production of any of the records of Government, not connected with state policy, calculated to throw light on the subject of inquiry.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound will ever pray.

Bomauja Aonnasjee
Manackjee Nesserwaujee
Dhunjeelhey Cursetjee
&c. &c. &c.

APPENDIX IV

*Memorial of the National Muhammadan Association, 1882**

From Mr. Ameer Ali, Secretary to the National Muhammadan Association, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—dated 14, Royd Street, Calcutta, the 6th February 1882.

I am desired by the Committee of Management of the National Muhammadan Association to forward, through the Bengal Government, the enclosed memorial to the Government of India.

As one of the principal points dealt with this memorial concerns Muhammadan education, and as this subject is at present under the immediate consideration of the Government of India, the Association begs that the papers may be forwarded with the least practicable delay.

To His Excellency the Most Honourable the Marquis of Ripon, G.K., P.C.G.M.I., Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

The humble memorial of the National
Muhammadan Association.

Respectfully sheweth,—1. That since the time Your Excellency has assumed the reins of Government in this

* Selections from the Records of Government

No. CC-V.

Home Department Serial No. 2

Correspondence
on the subject of

The Education of the Muhammadan Community in British
India and their employment in the
Public Service Generally.

(Printed by the Superintendent of Government Printing, India,
Calcutta, 1886) p. 23ff.

country, Your Excellency has evinced the greatest interest in the well-being of the people of India, and has always been animated with an earnest desire to deal equitably with all classes of the Indian community.

2. That with this knowledge of Your Lordship's solicitude for the well-being of the people confided to your care, your memorialists think it improbable that the present impoverished condition of the Muhammadans of India, as compared with their past prosperity, can have escaped Your Excellency's observation.

3. The causes which have led to the decadence and ruin of so many Muhammadan families in India are, your memorialists regret to say, still at work among their coreligionists, and it is for this reason, and in the hope that Government, when it is fully in possession of the facts connected with the impoverishment of the Muhammadans, may be induced to adopt some effectual measures for their amelioration and the improvement of their present condition, that your memorialists submit this memorial for Your Excellency's kind present condition.

4. Your memorialists are convinced that no measure of reform adopted within the community would have any appreciable effect in arresting the progress of decay to which they have referred, and it is therefore that your memorialists look to Government for those steps which the necessities of the case require.

5. The depressed and desperate condition of the Muhammadans at the present moment deserves every commiseration. Whilst every community has thrived and flourished under British rule the Muhammadans alone have declined and decayed. Every day their position is becoming worse, and the call for urgent measures on their behalf more pressing.

6. Your memorialists feel they would be failing in their duty to their Sovereign, if they did not call the attention of Your Excellency's Government to the fact, that there is at this moment a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction among all classes of Muhammadans in India with the present state of things. Your memorialists do not wish to be understood

that this dissatisfaction amounts to discontent or disaffection, for, as a matter of fact, the Indian Muhammadans have, since the assumption of the Government of India by the Crown, cherished a sincere attachment to Her Britannic Majesty, upon whom they look not only as the lawful Sovereign of India, but as the Protector of all that is most valued by Islam.

7. No Government, however, your memorialists venture to think, would be justified allowing the growth or continuance of a feeling of dissatisfaction among any class of its subjects; and your memorialists, relying on Your Excellency desire to acquire information from all quarters, which may enable Your Excellency to discharge the duties of your high office, in accordance with the dictates of your conscience, have thought it right to call prominent attention to the existence of such a feeling among the Muhammadans of India.

8. It has been sometimes said that the present impoverished condition of the Indian Mussulmans and their general decadence are due to their own apathy and neglect to avail themselves of the educational advantages offered to them by Government. In order to enable Your Lordship to apprehend Muhammadan ideas on the subject, your memorialist beg to represent the following circumstances for Your Excellency's consideration.

9. When the British first assumed the sovereignty of the Eastern Provinces of the Mogul Emperors of Delhi, in spite of many vicissitudes of fortune, the Muhammadans still maintained the monopoly of power and wealth in their hands. The treaty of the 12th August, 1765, by which Shah Alam, the last of the Moguls, entrusted the collection of the revenue of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the East India Company, made no alteration in the political condition of the Muhammadans. For a series of years the Mussulmans were scrupulously maintained in their position. Until the time of Lord Cornwallis, the administration of the country proceeded on the lines of the Muhammadan sovereigns. In 1793, Lord Cornwallis, who was especially deputed to India to correct the abuses which had crept into the Company's Government, owing to the malpractices of its servants, introduced various changes into the administrative and judicial systems, all of

which ultimately affected Mussulman prosperity to a material extent.

10. The measures introduced by Lord Cornwallis did not, however, make any immediate or decided alteration in the political condition of the Muhammadans, and in spite of the status which the Hindu collectors of revenue had acquired under the permanent settlement, and the new system of judicature, the Muhammadans continued to occupy the front rank among the Indian communities. The Civil Lists of those days show a proportion of 75 per cent of Muhammadans in the service of the State. It was not until Lord William Bentinck's administration that Mussulman decadence really commenced.

11. Your memorialists do not wish to occupy Your Lordship's attention by dwelling too long on the past prosperity of their co-religionists under the early English rule; but as the question of their amelioration is intimately connected with the causes which have led to their decline and impoverishment, it is necessary to describe as briefly as possible the results of Lord William Bentinck's policy.

From the first establishment of the Muhammadan power in India up to the year 1837, Persian was the official language of those Governments, including the British, which had inherited their power from the last Muhammadan sovereigns of Delhi. The conquest of India by the Muhammadans had been achieved by men gathered from different races, speaking a variety of tongues, but the Persian language was considered sufficient for the Government of India, not only by its Mussulman masters, but also by their successors in power up to the year 1837.

The contact of the Mussulmans with the Hindus gave birth to the composite language which is now called Urdu, and which is spoken by the Muhammadans all over India, with the exception of the deltaic districts of Eastern Bengal. From the Punjab as far down as Bhagalpur in the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal, Urdu, more or less pure, is not only the vernacular of the Muhammadans, but also of the majority of Hindus. In 1837 an order was promulgated that office business should thenceforward be conducted either in

English or in the provincial dialects. The language of the people of each province and the character in which it was originally designed to be written, were fixed upon as the most convenient and practicable substitute for the Persian. The plan succeeded in those provinces where the language was not Urdu or Hidustani. Hence the Tamil, the Telegu, the Maharatti, the Guzerati, and the Bengali languages superseded without much difficulty the Persian language and character in Madras, Bombay, Guzerat, and Bengal. In Behar, the North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab, where the language of the people had for several centuries been Urdu, and which had been written in the Persian character, the attempt, whilst causing great discontent both among the Hindus and the Muhammadans, ended in absolute failure. The British Government wished to introduce the Hindi-Kaithi, written in the stiff, archaic Nagri character, as the official language of these parts. But the change proposed was founded upon a misapprehension, and the attempt consequently failed signally. The Urdu written in the Persian character was substituted for Persian in Behar, the North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab. The substitution of the vernacular dialects and the vernacular character for Persian in the other provinces resulted in throwing out of employment a considerable body of Muhammadan subordinate officers, who were totally dependent for their subsistence upon the pay of Government.

The actual impoverishment of the middle class of Muhammadans dates from this epoch. English-educated Hindu youths, trained for the most part in Missionary institutions, from which the Mussulmans naturally stood aloof, now poured into every Government office and completely shut out the Muhammadans. A few unimportant offices remained in the hands of the Muhammadans, but year by year and day by day their number has decreased, until there has come to pass what Dr. Hunter described ten years ago in his "Indian Mussulmans,"—"there is now scarcely a Government office in which a Muhammadan can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of ink-pots, and mender of pens."

12. Whilst this radical change was introduced in the administrative policy of the country, rendering it necessary

on all aspirants for office under Government to know the language of the rulers, no order was passed making English education compulsory. On the contrary, up to the year 1864, the Muhammadans were fed with the hope that their own classics were the *sine qua non* for Government employment or for entering the profession of law. The order of Govt., declaring that candidates for munsiffships and pleaderships may pass their examinations either in Urdu or English, remained in force so late as 1864. A year or two later, however, a sudden change was introduced upsetting the previous orders and declaring that English alone should be the language in which the examination for higher grade pleaderships and munsiffships should be held. The measures since introduced from time to time placed the Muhammadans under a complete disadvantage. Before they had quite awakened to the necessity of learning English, they were shut out from Government employment.

13. In proof of what has been stated above, your memorialists desire to mention the following facts : In 1871, the proportion of Muhammadans to Hindus in the gazetted appointments was less than one-seventh; in 1880, the proportion fell below one-tenth. But it is in other and less conspicuous departments, where the distribution of State patronage is less closely watched, that the fate of the Mussulmans may be more accurately observed. In the Foreign Office staff, consisting, as far as your memorialists have been able to ascertain, of 54 officers, only two are Muhammadans. In the Home Department staff, composed of 63 officers, only one employer is a Muhammadan. In the Departments of Finance and Revenue formed of 75 officers, not one is a Muhammadan. In the Controller General's office with a staff of 63 officers, not one is a Muhammadan. In the office of the Secretary to the Government of Bengal (General and Revenue Department) with a staff of 90 officers of a superior grade, there is not a single Mussulman employed. The Judicial, Political, and Appointment Departments, composed of 82 officers, contain not a single Muhammadan. In the Office of the Accountant General of Bengal, out of 181 officers, there is not one Muhammadan employee. In the Board of Revenue, out of 113 assistants, only one belongs to the Muhammadan faith. In the offices of the Inspector

General of Registration in Bengal, one Muhammadan only is employed. In the Customs Department, with a staff of 130 principal officers and assistants, the Muhammadan race is conspicuous by its absence from the muster-roll. In the Preventive Department, in the Calcutta Collectorate, in the Office of the Director General of Post Offices India, there is, according to your memorialists' information, not a single Muhammadan employed. It is the same again in the Public Works Department. In the Postal Department, out of 2,035 officers, only 110 are Muhammadans. In the Department of Public Instruction, out of 573 officers, only 38 are Muhammadans. In the High Court out of 359 officers only 92 are Muhammadans. In the Calcutta Court of Small Causes, out of 27 ministerial officers only one is a Muhammadan. In considering the value of this calculation in Bengal, your memorialists would draw Your Lordship's attention to the fact that one-third of the population in the Lower Provinces is Muhammadan. In the Eastern districts, viz., Fureedpore, Pubna, Mymensingh, Rajshahye, Chittagong, Midnapore, Rungpore, &c. the Mussulmans outnumber the Hindus, in some places forming at least two-thirds of the whole population. The annexed table will give Your Excellency some idea of the disproportion existing at the present moment between the official preferment bestowed upon Hindus and Muhammadans, though your memorialists are afraid it is only approximately correct and not sufficiently exhaustive.

Comparative table of Muhammadan and non-Muhammadan employees in the Town of Calcutta.

Designation of offices	No. of Christian employees	No. of Hindu employees	No. of Muhammadan employees	Total No. of employees
Foreign Department	39	14	1	54
Home, Revenue, and Agri- cultural Department	39	23	1	63
Department of Finance and Commerce	17	58	—	75
Comptroller General's Off- ice	18	45	—	63

Designation of offices	No. of Christian employees	No. of Hindu employees	No. of Muhammadian employees	Total No. of employees
Bengal Secretariat (General, Revenue, Financial, and Statistical Department)	15	75	—	90
Judicial, Political, and Appointment Depart- ments	16	64	2	82
Accountant General's Office	12	169	—	181
Board of Revenue	24	88	1	113
Department of issue of Paper currency	11	7	—	18
Director General's Office in Calcutta (Postal)	11	29	—	40
Comptroller General's Office (Postal)	34	226	5	265
Post Master General's Office	65	264	37	366
(In the Moffussil) in Wes- tern Bengal Circle (Pos- tal Department)	7	763	22	792
In Eastern Bengal Circle (ditto)	3	151	9	163
In Behar and Orissa (ditto)	19	353	37	409
Office of the Inspector General of Registration	5	6	1	11
Customs Department	—	130	—	—
Department of Public Ins- truction	114	421	38	573
Office of the Director of Public Instruction	1	21	—	22
High Court (Original Jurisdiction)	25	91	—	116
High Court (Appellate Side)	20	113	92	243
Legal Remembrancer's office	1	11	1	13
Presidency Court of Small Causes	8	18	1	27
Surveyor General's Office	55	18	10	83

List of employees in the Mofussil

Districts	No. of Hindu employees	No. of Muhammadan employees	Total No. of employees
Bhagalpur	113	22	135
Bogra	91	33	124
Burdwan	117	14	131
Fureedpore	336	30	366
Howrah	206	8	214
Moorshedabad	343	39	382
Mymensingh	324	20	344
Midnapore	460	39	499
Pubna	179	26	205
Purneah	129	59	188
Rajshahye	287	57	338
Barisal	389	34	423

List of Gazetted Officers

	Christians	Hindus	Muhammadans	Total
Judges of the High Court of judicature	12	2	—	14
Covenanted Civil Servants appointed in England	248	7	—	255
Judicial Officers in the Non-Regulation Districts	1	—	—	1
Dy. Magistrates and Dy. Collectors	41	153	22	216
Judges of Small Cause Courts and Subordinate Judges	9	44	3	56
District and Sessions Judges	29	1	—	30
Munsiffs	—	217	14	231
Police Department Gazetted Officers	118	38	9	165
Public Works Department	167	217	17	401
Medical Department	98	24	3	125

	Christians	Hindus	Muhammadans	Total
Public Instruction Department	53	98	6	157
Registration Department	4	18	3	25
Forest, Excise, Assessed Tax, Custom, Salt, Opium, Stamp, Stationery, Mint and Survey	300	2	—	302
Total	1,080	821	77	1,978

In the North-Western Provinces the disproportion between the two races is probably not so great, and yet the Hindus outnumber the Muhammadans in the Government offices. In Madras, your memorialists are informed, the proportion of the Muhammadan to the Hindu employees of Government is as 1 to 10; in the interior of the Presidency it is as 1 to 33.

The introduction of the English Language as the official language of India—the language at least which opened the door to preferment and honour—carried with it the obligation, on the part of Government, that measures should be adopted and means afforded to facilitate the study of English by the Muhammadans. Under the Treaty of 1765 they were entitled to some special consideration, and a more generous policy, your memorialists are inclined to believe, would have saved them from the condition into which they have now fallen.

15. Under the Muhammadan domination besides the Omrahs and Mansabdars—the great feudal lords and office-holders,—the Aymadars and Lakhirajdars, who held revenue-free grants from the chiefs and sovereigns, contributed in no small degree to the prosperity and well-being of the community. These grants were generally made to men of learning for charitable and pious uses. The majority of the scholastic institutions were thus supported by revenue-free grants made by the sovereigns, or by endowments created by private individuals.

During the reign of turmoil and disturbance which followed the death of Aurungzebe in 1707, when the Emperors lost their hold on the outlying provinces, sanads

creating aymadari rights and lakhiraj tenures were frequently granted by the local chiefs on their own authority.

From the time when the East India Company first acquired dominion over these provinces, up to the year 1828, when the resumption proceedings were inaugurated, the British authorities, whilst repeatedly asserting the right of the Suzerain power to all grants which had not received the sanction of the Mogul sovereigns, advisedly abstained from taking any action to oust people from lands which had been handed down from generation to generation for about three quarters of a century. The resumption proceedings, which lasted for eighteen years, were conducted with a degree of harshness which has left behind a legacy of bitterness. Hundreds of ancient families were ruined, and the educational system of the Mussulmans, which was almost entirely maintained by rent-free grants, received its death-blow. "The scholastic classes of the Muhammadans emerged from the eighteen years of harrying absolutely ruined." The resumption proceedings terminated in 1846, and since then the decline of the Muhammadans has gone on with accelerated pace.

16. Your memorialists feel assured that the circumstances to which they have adverted in the foregoing paragraphs will shew to Your Excellency that Muhammadan impoverishment and Muhammadan decadence are not the results of Muhammadan apathy, or of any unwillingness on their part to study the language of an alien race. At any rate, whatever may have been the causes in former times, there is not the smallest doubt that within the last quarter of a century strong desire has grown up among the Mussulmans for the study of the English language and literature. Their backwardness is due to their general poverty. As a matter of fact the well-to-do middle class—the section which forms the backbone of a nation—has become totally extinct among the Muhammadans. Few Muhammadan parents are in a position to give their sons the education necessary for competing successfully with Eurasian and Hindu youths in the various walks of life. In the majority of cases Muhammadan students are compelled, from sheer want and the indigency of their parents to abandon their studies at the very threshold of

their scholastic career. His Honour, the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who has always taken a lively interest in the welfare of the Muhammadans, and to whom the Mussulman race owes a large debt of gratitude for all his endeavours in the cause of Muhammadan education and improvement, has rendered them some assistance by the establishment of a few scholarships, and by providing for the payment by Government, in certain cases, of the schooling fees of Muhammadan students. But your memorialists regret to say this help is a mere drop in the ocean.

17. Your memorialists are fully conscious that this appeal for State assistance may possibly be regarded by hostile critics as betraying a weakness in the national character and it may be said that it is a mistake to rely upon State employment as the key-stone to national prosperity. Your memorialists would, however, respectfully submit that the absence of capital is a great stumbling-block in the path of Muhammadan enterprise, which prevents their engaging in industrial pursuits and destroys all commercial activity.

Under the circumstances described in the preceding paragraphs Your Excellency cannot be surprised to learn that the Mussulmans consider themselves grievously handicapped in the race for material progress and prosperity. For the last twenty years the Mussulmans have made strenuous attempts to qualify themselves to enter the lists successfully with the Hindus, but, unfortunately, with every avenue to public employment, already jealously blocked by members of a different race, it is almost impossible for a Muhammadan candidate to obtain a footing in any Government office. Your memorialists do not mean by these remarks to reflect upon the Hindu community, but desire simply to call attention to fact which, to a large extent, paralyzes the action of Government. In the subordinate walks of life, the briskness of competition naturally creates jealousy, which often degenerates into intrigue; and where vested interests are concerned, it must be expected that those who are already in enjoyment of influence or power should try to keep out others by legitimate, and sometimes illegitimate, means. When any subordinate office in a Department happens to fall vacant the claims of the Muhammadan candidates are either not brought

to the notice of the Head of the Department, or are treated with contempt or indifference. Sometimes when a Muhammadan has been fortunate enough to obtain an appointment, intrigues are set on foot, often not unsuccessfully, to get him out.

19. Your memorialists feel it their duty to call Your Excellency's attention to another serious grievance of the Muhammadans which relates to judicial administration. The frequent miscarriage of justice, occasioned by the insufficient acquaintance generally possessed by English and Hindu Judges with the principles of Muhammadan law, has given rise to a certain feeling of dissatisfaction and distrust among all classes of the Mussulman population in India. They allege, and not without reason, that since the abolition of the offices of Mufti and Kaziul-kuzzat—officers specially authorised to interpret and expound the Muhammadan law to European Judges—the Muhammadan law has practically ceased to be administered. Even where it is attempted to be applied or enforced, the attempt is always uncertain in its result. The major portion of the Muhammadan law regulating the domestic relations is not recognized by the courts of justice in India.

20. Your memorialists have thus far endeavoured to bring to Your Excellency's notice the preset condition of the Muhammadans and their chief grievances. They have stated frankly and honestly the views of the Mussulman community regarding the difficulties under which they labour. Your memorialists deem it their duty also to represent to Government their view as to the necessary remedial measures.

21. Your memorialists would humbly suggest, in the first place, that the balance of State patronage should be restored between the Hindus and the Muhammadans. Your memorialists are aware of the orders which have, from time to time, been passed by the Government of India, as well as by the Local Governments, directing the Heads of Departments and other State officials to pay due regard to the claims of the Muhammadans, but your memorialists regret to mention that no practical gain has been derived by the Mussulmans from these orders. The reason of this appears to be two-fold, firstly, the same desire to deal equitably with the Muhammadans which animates Your Excellency and the

higher officials of Government does not seem to be shared by all the officers who have the actual distribution and dispensation of State patronage; and, secondly, an undue importance is attached to University Education. It happens frequently, that when there are two candidates, one a Hindu, the other Muhammadan, preference is given to the Hindu candidate on the sole ground that he possesses a University certificate, although, as regards general education, the Muhammadan may possess superior qualifications. As a matter of fact, owing to some extent to the declared policy of Government, University education did not take root among the Muhammadans until very recently, the consequence of which is that, proportionately, there are fewer graduates and undergraduates among the Muhammadans than among the Hindus. At the same time there are many Muhammadans who, without having graduated at the Calcutta University, possess as thorough an acquaintance with the English language as any ordinary B. A. Your memorialists would therefore humbly suggest that in the dispensation of State patronage no regard should be paid to mere University degree, but the qualifications of the candidates should be judged by an independent standard. It will not be considered presumptuous on your memorialists' part if they venture to submit that stamina and force of character are as necessary in the lower as in the higher walks of life, and these qualities can scarcely be tested by University examinations.

22. Your memorialists feel sure that the numerical inferiority of the Muhammadans in the Subordinate Judicial Service, appearing on the statements which your memorialists have already submitted, cannot escape Your Excellency's observation. This numerical inferiority is due to the conditions which were laid down in the year 1865 or 1866 and which since then have become more stringent, regarding the qualifications necessary for passing the higher grade pleaders' examination, or obtaining a munsiffship. The condition that no one should be appointed a Munsiff except a B. L. of the Calcutta University has proved seriously detrimental to Muhammadan interest. Many men thoroughly qualified to hold any judicial appointment are prevented from entering the service of the State, simply from the fact that they have not obtained a University degree. Your memorialists

submit that the principle adopted by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in making selections for the Subordinate Executive Service should be followed in appointments to the Judicial Service, that is, there should be no hard and fast rule regarding the qualifications necessary for entering the Judicial Service, but that, if a candidate is in other respects properly qualified, the fact of his not being a B. L. should not stand in the way of his nomination. As such a principle would apply to both Muhammadans and Hindus, no outcry can possibly be raised that Government is making undue concessions to the Mussulman race. As, however, it may be urged that this suggestion of your memorialists would lay open the door to much favouritism, your memorialists would submit that separate examinations may be instituted for appointment to the Subordinate Judicial Service without the candidates being required to submit to the preliminary condition of passing the Bachelor of Arts examination of the Calcutta University.

23. Your memorialists would humbly suggest that some comprehensive scheme, similar to the one recently devised for the Eurasian community, be framed for the education of the Muhammadans. Owing to the general impoverishment of the Mussulman community the confiscation of their scholastic foundations, the neglect, ruin and wastes of their charitable endowments, Muhammadan education had fallen entirely into the background. Muhammadan parents are not in a position to give more than a merely nominal education to their sons; family necessities and the urgency of providing for the daily wants of life force many a student to abandon his studies early in life. It is therefore that your memorialists are compelled to urge upon Government the absolute need of making especial provisions for Muhammadan education. Your memorialists submit that similar facilities should be accorded to the Muhammadans as are being effected to the Eurasian community. They are fairly entitled to ask that the large funds appertaining to the various endowments, which still exist under the control and direction of the Government, should be scrupulously and religiously applied to promote Muhammadan education. At the present moment there are numerous wakf properties scattered over the most of which, besides a religious object, had originally the promotion of

learning in view. Your memorialists submit that the income of these endowments should not be allowed to be wasted, but should be applied with due regard to the instructions of the donors.

24. Your memorialists fully recognize the hopelessness of re-introducing at this stage the Persian language as the official language of India. They consider it would be a decidedly retrogressive policy to attempt to do so, or even to hold University examinations in the vernacular. The step taken in 1837 renders it necessary that Government should continue in its progressive policy. Every hope for the regeneration of India depends at present upon the spread of English education and the diffusion of Western ideas through the medium of the English language. A thorough knowledge of the English language and literature forms now the only avenue to preferment and honour. It having been admitted in principle that the natives of India should have a share in the Government of their country, it is incumbent, both on the Hindus and the Muhammadans, to study diligently the language of the dominant race, their mode of thought, their science, and their literature. It is for this reason, and in order that the Mussulmans may be enabled to emerge from the desperate condition into which they have fallen and take their proper place among the Indian nationalities that your memorialists urge upon Government the adoption of the measures they have ventured to suggest.

Your memorialists would humbly suggest the appointment of a Commission consisting of the Director of Public Instruction in these provinces, one or two European officials and some leaders of thought and advocates of reform from the Muhammadan community to examine the whole question of Mussulman education, and to devise a practical scheme for that purpose. Your memorialists urge the appointment of a separate Commission to enquire into the subject of Muhammadan education, especially as they find the Muhammadan element is most inadequately represented on the Education commission just appointed.

In connection with this branch of their appeal to Your Excellency, your memorialists would urge upon Your Lordship's Government the necessity of preserving and

utilizing the existing Mussulman endowments for educational purposes. The vast accumulations of the Mohsin foundation are, to a large extent, lying unapplied. Your memorialists would suggest that a Commission be appointed to examine into the nature of these endowments and accretions, whether they should or should not be applied to promote Muhammadan education, and that Act XX of 1863 be amended in accordance with the suggestions of such Commission.

25. A memorial has been submitted by the people of Behar to the Bengal Government praying for the withdrawal of the order substituting Nagri character for the Persian in the Behar courts. Your memorialists have no doubt that when all the facts connected with this subject are considered by the Lieutenant Governor, His Honor will be pleased to withdraw the order in question, which appears to have been made on insufficient data. The largest numbers of Hindus in the Province of Behar are, in their manners, their customs, and their modes of amusement, Muhammadans. Their polish and their culture are derived from the Mussulmans. They pride themselves upon speaking pure Urdu. The change in question has proved vexatious to all the educated classes in Behar. Urdu has been the language of the province for several centuries. It is not only intelligible to the masses but it, in a more or less modified form, spoken by everybody. It is a matter of everyday occurrence in Behar that persons, who belong strictly to the masses, are brought before the courts of justice either as witnesses or as parties. An illiterate cultivator, from village remote from town, stands in the witness-box before an European officer who knows no other Native language than the Urdu or Hindustani. An educated pleader stands up to examine or cross-examine him. The questions put and the answers received are literally in Urdu or Hindustani, and neither the Urdu-knowing officer, nor the so-called Hindi knowing villager, feels the least difficulty in communicating his ideas to the other without the assistance of an interpreter. The unnecessary introduction of the Nagri character into the law courts of the Province of Behar has tended to irritate the Muhammadans without satisfying the advocates of Hindi, who are now clamouring for a change of language. The difficulty of rapidly writing Nagri and

expressing accurately legal expression and ideas, in that character makes it objectionable to all classes of people.

26. Your memorialists would respectfully urge upon Government the necessity of improving the administration of Mussulman law. Your memorialists would accordingly suggest the appointment in the mofussil of a number of Muhammadan Judges qualified to expound the Muhammadan law; in fact, to sit as Assessor Judges in the trial of Muhammadan cases. In the High Courts of Calcutta, the North-Western Provinces, Madras, and Bombay, as well as in the Chief Court of Lahore, a Muhammadan Judge should be appointed to assist the European and Hindu Judges in administering properly the Mussulman law. As regards the appointment of Muhammadan Judges in the High Courts of India, it is a matter respecting which the Mussulmans may fairly consider themselves aggrieved for whilst several Hindu Judges have been appointed in Madras, in Bombay, and in Calcutta, no Mussulman has been fortunate enough to obtain a seat on the Bench of the superior tribunal.

27. Your memorialists have ventured to offer these remarks in the hope that by honestly and faithfully representing Muhammadan ideas with regard to their alleged grievances and the remedial measures which seem necessary from their point of view, your memorialists may render some assistance to Your Lordship in achieving the object which Your Lordship has in view, namely, the welfare of the people of India at large. Your memorialists feel assured that Your Excellency would not willingly allow the Mussulman race to continue in its present condition of decadence and depression—a condition which, your memorialists believe, is alike injurious to the community as to the interest of the Empire.

And your memorialists, as in duty bound, shall every pray.

Calcutta.
14 Royd Street:
The 6th February, 1882. }

Mahomed Farrakh Shah,
President.
Meer Mahomed Ally,
Vice-President.
Ameer Ali,
Secretary.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER I—*The State and Society* (pp. 10—32)

1. P. C. 12, Pottinger to Elphinstone, 10. 8 1818 quoted by Kenneth Ballhatchett in his 'Social Policy and Social change in Western India' (1817-1830)
2. Ibid. 13, Elphinstone to Pottinger, 18. 8. 1818.
3. Ibid. Bom. J. C., Briggs to Chaplin, 20. 11. 1819.
4. The Father of Modern India, Part II, p. 20.
5. R. C. Majumdar, *Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 69.
6. The Father of Modern India, Part I, p. 30, 34.
7. Hansard, Debate in the House of Commons, March 22, 1838.
8. *Asiatic Journal*, May-August, 1840, p. 191.
9. G. Parameswaran Pillai, 'Representative Indians' 1st Ed. 1897, p. 196.
10. Ibid, p. 197.
11. Madras Records, Public Dept., No. 34A, 34B.
12. Ibid, 1847, No. 31-32.
13. L.S.S.O' Malley—*Modern India and the West*, p. 370, 620.
14. Syed Ahmad Khan—*The Causes of Indian Revolt*, p. 16.
15. Madras Records, Public Department, 1859, No. 1-4.
16. Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor General, 1864 and 1866, p. 107, 175.
17. Ram Gopal—*Lokamanya Tilak*, p. 68.
18. Fifth Report of the Select Committee of Indian Territories to the House of Commons in 1853, p. 91.
19. Minutes and Proceedings of the Bombay Association, 1853, preserved in the Bombay Asiatic Society Library.
- 20(a). G. P. Pillai—'Representative Indians'.
- 20(b). Baba Padmanji—*Once Hindu, Now Christian* Chap. XI.
21. Benoy Ghosh—*Vidyasagar O Bengali Samaj* (In Bengali) Vol. II, pp. 121-122.
22. "Friend of India " quoted in Prescilla Chapman's 'Hindu Female Education' (London, 1839), p. 34.
23. *Calcutta Journal*, 18th May, 1819.
24. *Bengal Spectator*, July 1842.
25. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Falgun 1776 Saka.
26. Indian Social Reform, p. 295.

27. 'The Hindu Reformer and Politician', Vol. II, 1883, p. 769.
28. K. Subba Rao—*Revived Memories*, Ch. XV.
29. *Indian Social Reform*, Part II, p. 133.
30. Pandita Ramabai—*The High Caste Hindu Woman* (1887 Ed.), p. 116.
31. C. E. Buckland—*Bengal under the Lt. Governors*, Vol. I, p. 324.
32. *Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha*, 1891, pp. 30-31, article on "The Brahmins of Bengal and Kulinism" by Dinanath Ganguli.
33. Government of India to Government of Bengal, Home Department, Legislative, 1866, Vol. 53, pp. 267-69, quoted by Philips in his 'Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858-1947, Select Documents', p. 729.
34. Short Biography of Rash Behari Mukhopadhyaya (Cal. 1881), pp. 4-5.
- 35(a). Report of the Lahore Widow Marriage Society, 1929.
- 35(b). B. N. Motivala—Karsandas Mulji, p. 126.
36. Har Bilas Sarda Commemoration Volume, pp. 522-33.
37. Proceedings of the Leg. Council of G. G., 4th Feb., 1870.
38. Census Report, 1911, Part I, p. 216.
39. *Indian Mirror*, 15th August, 1866.
40. Proceedings of the Leg. Council of G. G., 1871, p. 415.
41. Calcutta Journal of Medicine, July 1871, quoted in the *Indian Social Reform*, Part IV, p. 255ff.
42. Proceedings of the Legislative Council of G. G., 1872, pp. 150-177.
43. Infant Marriage in India, pp. 3-4. The two pamphlets are quoted verbatim in Dayaram Gidumal's "Life and Life-Work of B. M. Malabari." (Bombay, 1888).
44. Enforced Widowhood, *Ibid*, pp. 6-13.
45. *Ibid*. pp. 201-202.

*CHAPTER II—Political Thought of
Raja Rammohan Roy (pp. 33-77)*

1. On the history of English Education before the time of Rammohan Roy see Dr. N. N. Law's 'Promotion of Learning in India under the Company' and Winternitz's 'History of Sanskrit Literature Vol. I.' An interesting manuscript entitled, 'Shagarf-nama-i-Walayāt' written by Itsamuddin Ahmad, an inhabitant of Panchnore in the Nadia District, was exhibited in the Patna session of the Historical

Records Commission by Dr. S. C Sarkar and Prof. K. K. Datta. This manuscript shows that the author was a fluent speaker in English and acted as an interpreter between the Emperor of Delhi and the English in 1765. The manuscript gives an account of his travels in England, whence he came back in 1767.

2. The Trust deed of the Brahmo Samaj, p. 213, Memorial to the Supreme Court, Raja Rammohan Roy's Works (Panini Office ed.) p. 443.
3. *Asiatic Journal*, Intelligence, May, 1838.
4. *Samachar Darpan*, 24th March, 1832.
5. *Bengal Spectator*, July, 1842.
6. The Raja was then in England, and he held that the Moslems had better legal training and were more suited to hold judicial offices than the Hindus.
7. *Asiatic Journal*, 1832, Jan-April, pp. 281-88.
8. *Calcutta Courier*, May 17, 1836—"This is the first practical instance, in the Civil Service, of the application of the principle declared in the 87th section of the Charter Act." Brajendra Nath Banerji has shown that the post was not actually conferred on Rajaram.—*Modern Review*, May, 1926. The nomination of Rajaram to a Bengal Writership by the President of the Board of Control was set aside by the Court of Directors.
9. Works of Rammohan Roy, pp. 929-30.
10. Ibid. p. 234. The Raja refers to many Historical works on Modern India.
11. Ibid. p. 375; 'Brief remarks regarding modern encroachments on the ancient rights of women'.
12. Ibid. p. 375. This statement shows that long before the researches of V. A. Smith, there was a tradition of the foreign origin of the Rajputs in India. The Raja's view of the Rajput age as one feudal tyranny and submergence of the masses of people is exactly what modern researches have established.
13. Ibid. p. 234, 'Preliminary remarks on judicial and revenue systems of India'.
14. Ibid. p. 234.
15. Ibid. p. 233.
16. Ibid. *The Brahmanical Magazine*, p. 146.
17. Ibid. p. 459.
18. Ibid. p. 300.
19. Ibid. p. 926. It shows that the Raja did not learn French till January, between 1823 and 1831. He must have read Montesquieu from an English translation.

20. Ibid. p. 353, 'Second conference on the practice of burning widows alive'.
21. *Bengal Harukaru*, July 18, 1843 states that the Raja met Bentham in England and the great philosopher addressed Rammohan as his "intensely admired and dearly beloved collaborateur in the service of mankind."
22. Murray, Robert H.—*Studies in the English Social and Political Thinkers of the Nineteenth Century*, p.60.
23. Works of Rammohan Roy, p.263.
24. Ibid. p. 303. He quoted Blackstone in his Appendix to the "Exposition of the practical operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India'.
25. It is noteworthy that the loss of political power is always present before the Raja's mind in any civic discussion on Press, Law, Liberty of the subject etc. He regarded the various benefits of British rule as a partial compensation for the loss of political power.
26. Ibid. pp. 316-17.
27. Rammohan Roy referred to India sometimes as a Colony of Great Britain and sometimes as a Dependency.
28. Ibid. p. 923.
29. Ibid. p.925.
30. Ibid. p. 394.
31. Ibid. p. 461, 'Appeal to the King in Council'.
32. Ibid. p. 399, 'Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property'.
33. Ibid. p. 230, Paper on the Revenue System of India.
34. *Dayabhag*, Ch. II, Section 28.
35. Works of Rammohan Roy, p.420.
36. Ibid. p. 409.
37. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company, 1832, vol. I, Public, p.615.
38. Ibid. Question 1467.
39. Ibid. Question 266.
40. Ibid. Question 1608.
41. Ibid. Question 1608, Evidence of Rt. Hon. T. P. Courtenay.
42. Works of Rammohan Roy, p.461.
43. *Asiatic Journal*, Sept-Dec 1833. The January-April issue of 1835 informs that the article was written by Mr. Arnot.
44. Ibid. Sept.-Dec. 1833, p. 212.
45. Works of Rammohan Roy, p. 267.
46. Ibid. p. 456. Appeal to the King in Council, para 29.
47. Ibid. p. 457, para 31.

48. Ibid. p. 458, para 33.
49. Ibid. p. 464, para 46.
50. Minutes of Evidence, *Op. Cit.* Questions 839-842.
51. Works of Rammohan Roy, p. 464.
52. This is the first demand by Indians for a Commission of Enquiry.
53. Minutes of Evidence, *Op. Cit.* q. 1722.
54. Works of Rammohan Roy, p. 266.
55. Minutes of Evidence, *Op. Cit.* q. 346.
56. Ibid. q. 345-49.
57. Ibid. q. 617-19.
58. Ibid. q. 822.
59. Ibid. q. 1566.
60. Ibid. q. 1572.
61. Works of Rammohan, p. 442.
62. Ibid. p. 446 Appeal to the King in Council—"Natives of Bengalremained during the whole period of Muhammadan conquest faithful to the existing Government, although their property was often plundered, their religion insulted and their blood wantonly shed'.
63. Ibid. p. 874.
64. The Raja's remarks are true only with reference to the Mughal Government and the reign of Alauddin Husain Shah.
65. Ibid. p. 263, Judicial system of India.
66. Ibid. p. 448.
67. Ibid. p. 283—"Contrary to the judicious system established by Lord Cornwallis, and to the common principles of justice as they (the collectors) thus became at once parties and judges in their own case, consequently such powers very often prove injurious to those who attempt to maintain their own right against the claims of Government, whose agents the Collectors are.'
68. O' Malley—*The Indian Civil Service*, p. 64.
69. Works of Rammohan Roy, pp. 246-49.
70. Ibid. p. 250-51. The President of the Board of Control proposed to introduce a bill rendering Indians eligible for appointment as Justices of Peace and to sit on Grand Jury as well as Petit Jury. The Directors of the East India Company raised certain objections to the proposed bill in a letter, dated the 8th December, 1831. The Raja proved the fitness of Indians in a communication to the Board of Control. One of the main grounds for the objection of the

Directors was that Indians, if appointed jurors, would sit in judgment over Europeans. Rammohan Roy answered the objection thus : "It lies with every Government to establish and preserve a community of feeling, interest and habitude among the various classes of its subjects by treating them all as one great family without showing an invidious preference to any particular tribe or sect, but giving fair and equal encouragement to the worthy and intelligent under whatever denomination they may be found. But by pursuing a contrary plan, for 'community of feeling' will of course be substituted 'religious jealousy', for community of interest, a spirit of domination or ascendancy, on the one hand, of hatred and revenge on the other; and lastly, for 'community of habitude' will be established a broad line of demarcation and separation even in conducting public business"—*India Gazette*, January 28, 1833.

71. Works of Rammohan Roy, p. 253.
72. Ibid. p. 262.
73. Ibid. p. 249.
74. Ibid. p. 248.
75. Ibid. p. 245, Judicial System of India.
76. Ibid. p. 268.
77. Ibid. p. 263.
78. Ibid. p. 454.
79. Ibid. p. 146, *The Brahmanical Magazine*.
80. Milton, *Arcopagitica*, p. 55 (Bonn's Library ed. Vol.II).
81. Appeal to the King in Council, para 39.
82. Papers relating to the Public Press in India (1858) pp. 4 and 24. In 1799 the Bengal Government issued the following regulations for the Public Press :
 - (a) Every printer of Newspaper to print his name at the bottom of the paper.
 - (b) Every editor and proprietor of a paper to deliver in his name and place of abode to the Secretary to Government.
 - (c) No paper to be published on a Sunday.
 - (d) No paper to be published at all until it shall have been previously inspected by the Secretary to the Government, or by a person authorised by him for that purpose.
 - (e) The penalty for offending against any of the above regulations to be immediate embarkation for Europe.
83. *Modern Review*, November, 1928—'An early chapter of the Press in Bengal' by Brajendranath Banerjee.

84. Papers relating to the Public Press in India (ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 4th May, 1858) pp. 25-26.
85. Appeal to the King in Council, para 54.
86. Ibid. para 46.
87. Ibid. para 31.
88. Ibid. paras 31, 35 and 36.
89. Papers relating to the Public in India, p.20.
90. Ibid. p. 21.
91. Works, p. 440. Memorial to the Supreme Court.
92. Appendix to the Report from Select Committee, (Public, 1832) p. 295.
93. Appeal to the King in Council, paras 19, 22 and 23.
94. Papers relating to the Public Press in India, p. 14.
95. Works of Rammohan Roy, p. 413.
96. Ibid. p. 273, Revenue System of India, "From a reference to the laws and the histories of the country, I believe that lands in India were individual property in ancient times'.
97. Ibid. p. 305.
98. Ibid. p. 289.
99. Ibid. p. 289.
100. Ibid. pp. 278-79.
101. Ibid. p. 290—A Paper on the Revenue System of India.
102. Ibid. p. 291.
103. Ibid. pp. 305-306. Appendix to questions and answers on the Revenue System.
104. *The Friend of India* (Quarterly series) No. XIII, Oct. 1825.
105. Works, pp. 285, 311.
106. *Asiatic Journal*, June, 1830.
107. *Calcutta Quarterly Magazine and Review*, 1833, p. 405.
108. *Samachar Darpan*, Oct. 15, 1831.
109. Works pp. 315-19—Settlement in India by Europeans.
110. A letter on English Education to Lord Amherst.
111. Works, pp. 476-77—Address to Lord William Bentinck.
112. Ibid. p. 564—An Appeal to the Christian Public.
113. Ibid. p. 268.

CHAPTER III— *The Philosophical Radicals* (pp. 78-117)

1. *Calcutta Quarterly Magazine and Review*, 1833, p. 405.
2. Pearychand Mitra—*Life of David Hare*.
3. *Bengal Annual*, 1831.
4. *Bengal Spectator*, Sept. 1, 1842.

5. When Prasannacoomar Tagore performed the Durga Puja ceremony, Derozio attacked him vigorously in the "East Indian"—*India Gazette*, Oct. 19, 1831.
6. The Presidency College Register, Part I, Ch. I; "Hume's Works were then read with avidity; also Tom Paine's 'Age of Reason' for a copy of which eight rupees was offered by some of the pupils. (of the Hindu College)"—*Calcutta Christian Observer*, Aug. 1832.
7. *Asiatic Intelligence*, June, 1831.
8. *Friend of India*, March 16, 1843.
9. *India Gazette*, February 17, 1830.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Mookerjee's Magazine*, 1861, p. 251.
12. The Bengal Spectator, Sept. 1, 1842, calls it the 'Academic Institution', while others writing on the period call it the 'Academic Association'.
13. Manmathanath Ghosh—*Life of Dakshinaranjan Mukhopadhyaya*, pp. 59-61. *The Bengal Harukaru*, January 16, 1843 states that in 1843 the number of members of the Society was 200.
14. *Calcutta Review*, Oct-Dec. 1844, p. 270.
15. Shibnath Sastri—*Life of Ramtanu Lahiri* (third ed.) p. 168
16. *India Gazette*, Feb. 17, 1830.
17. *The Bengal Spectator*, Sept. 1, 1842.
18. *The India Gazette*, March 5, 1830.
19. *The Hindu Pioneer*, quoted in the *Asiatic Journal*, May-August, 1838, in the essay on the Education of the Native of India.
20. Shibnath Sastri—*Op. Cit.* p. 169.
21. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, 1800 Saka, article on "Anecdotes about Rammohan Roy".
22. Shibnath Sastri—*Op. Cit.* pp. 129-30.
23. Autobiography of Rajnarayan Bose, p. 117.
24. *The Parthenon*, Feb. 15, 1830 quoted in the *India Gazette* of Feb. 17, 1830.
25. *The India Gazette*, Feb. 12, 1830. The Hindoo Literary Society, referred to above, must have been the Academic Association or Institution.
26. *India Gazette*, Feb. 12, 1830.
27. Bholanath Chandra—*Life of Digambar Mitra*, Vol. I, p. 19.
28. Shibnath Sastri—*Op. Cit.*, p. 128.
29. *Hindu Patriot*, January 21, 1858.
30. *Gyananneshun*, quoted in the *India Gazette*, april 12, 1833.

31. It is surprising that Rasik Krishna's article was allowed to be published by the Government despite the Press Law of 1823.
32. *Gyananneshun*, quoted in the *India Gazette*, April 8, 1833.
33. *Ibid.* Quoted in the *India Gazette*, Feb. 28, 1833. See also *Calcutta Review* XIII, pp. 124-61.
34. *Ibid.* Quoted in the *India Gazette*, March 20, 1833.
35. *Ibid.* Quoted in the *India Gazette*, March 29, 1833.
36. *Ibid.* Quoted in the *India Gazette*, Feb. 1, 1833.
37. This argument was taken up by Bankimchandra in his essay on "The Peasants of Bengal".
38. *Gyananneshun*, quoted in the *India Gazette*, May 10, 1833.
39. The Presidency College Register, p. 452.
40. Shibnath Sastri—*Life of Ramtanu Lahiri*, p. 168. I think a worshipper of Equality like Tarachand found it humiliating to serve in the subordinate capacity of the Munsiff, and therefore, resigned his post. My hypothesis is supported by the tenour of the editorial articles written by Tarachand in the *Bengal Spectator*. In one of these articles (p. 6, 1842) he says that service in the judicial branch "often becomes very unpleasant from the present state of feeling entertained by the generality of the Covenanted Service towards their native subordinates". Rajnarayan Bose in his autobiography (p. 54) mentions that he and Maharashi Devendranath Tagore put up with Tarachand at Burdwan during the Puja Vacation in 1846.
41. In the meeting convened for establishing the British India Society Tarachand moved the third Resolution and said: "that unused as he was to appear as a speaker before the public, he could do little more than submit the resolution placed in his hand. He was most anxious for the success of the work in which those around him were embarked, and would do all in his humble power to assist it, but it could not be in the way of making speeches." *Bengal Harukaru*, April 24, 1843.
42. *Speeches of George Thompson*, edited by Rai Yogeshur Mitter (1895).
43. *The Bengal Harukaru*, Feb. 13, 1843.
44. *India Gazette*, Feb. 5, 1830.
45. *Calcutta Review*, January, 1911, S. C. Sanial's articles on "History of the Press in India".
46. *The Bengal Spectator*, Sept. 1842, p. 88.
47. *Ibid.* Nov. 15, 1842.

48. Ibid. January 1, 1843, p. 3.
49. Ibid.
50. *The Bengal Spectator*, 1842, p. 6.
51. Ibid. April 25, 1843.
52. Ibid. July 11, 1843.
53. Ibid. January 15, 1843, An article signed by K (apparently Krishna Mohan Banerjee) published p. 100 of the paper in 1842; also advocates the opening of judicial and fiscal officers to competitive examination. The writer suggests that Indians should "petition and repetition the Supreme Legislature itself until the voice of reason and justice finds at last an echo in every British heart". This foreshadows the policy of the Congress in the pre-Gandhian age.
54. *The Bengal Spectator*, Sept. 1, 1843.
55. *Bengal Harukaru*, March 2, 1843. Dakshinaranjan Mukhopdhyaya's essay on "The present state of the East India Company's Criminal Judicature, and Police under the Bengal presidency", is our source of information, where no other reference is given. A summary of the essay was published in the *Harukaru* on Feb. 13, 1843. The full essay was published in the same paper on March 2 and 3, 1843.
56. Ibid. Feb. 13, 1843. He said this in reply to Captain Richardson's objections to the remarks he had made in his essay.
57. *The friend of India*, Feb. 16, 1843.
58. *The Englishman*, June 18, 1870.
59. Akshoy Kumar Dutta writes in the Introduction to the second volume of his *Bharatvarshiya Upasaka Sampradaya*: "Your (Rammohan's) contemporaries and especially the later generations of educated people have conferred on you the royal crown and have shouted forth your glory. You have vanquished those who had been reigning so long undisputably over the minds of the Hindus. So you are not simply a Raja but the Raja of Rajas".
60. Ibid. "The trumpet call of yours in favour of Science is still resounding in our ears".
61. Mm. Haraprasad Sastri writes in his *Bengali Literature of the Present Century*, (pp. 11-12) that under the editorship of Akshoy Kumar the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* "was at that time the missionary of European culture in the whole of Bengal. Akshoy Kumar Dutta was the first writer to introduce western outlook and mentality among the Bengali youths. He is the first moral preceptor of New Bengal".
62. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1773 Phalgun.

63. Ibid. Saka 1777 Vaisakha.
64. Ibid. Saka 1775, Asvina.
65. Ibid. Saka 1777, Vaisakha.
66. *Dharmaniti* (11th ed.) pp. 84-86.
67. *Tattvabodhini Patrika* Saka, 1772, Agrahayana.
- 68(a). *Dharmaniti* Ch. V. pp. 50-51.
- 68(b). *Vahya vastur Sahita Manava Prakritir Sambandha Vichara*, Vol. II, p. 22 (5th ed.).
69. *Dharmaniti* Ch. V. pp. 50-51.
70. *Tattvabodhini Patrika* Saka 1776, Pausa,—*Dharmaniti* (This and many other portions of *Dharmaniti*, published in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, have not been included in the book bearing the title *Dharmaniti*. The author intended to publish a second volume of the *Dharmaniti*, but he could not do so owing to a severe and incurable malady.
71. Ibid. Saka 1776, No. 140.
72. *Dharmaniti*, Ch. III, p. 26.
73. Ibid. Ch. X, pp. 169-170.
74. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka, 1775 Asvina.
75. Ibid. Saka 1772 Shrabana.
76. Ibid. Saka 1775, Asvina. No. 122.
77. *Dharmqniti*, Ch. V., pp. 59-62.
78. Ibid. Ch. VII, p. 141.
79. Ibid. Ch. VIII, p. 139.
80. Ibid. p. 144.
81. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1775 Asvina.
82. *Vidyadarsana*, 1842, No. 4.
83. *Dharmaniti*, pp. 124-129.
84. *Vahya Vastur etc. Op. Cit.* Vol. II, p. 60.
85. *Dharmaniti*, pp. 136-41.
86. *Bharatbarsiya Upasaka Sampradaya*, Vol. II, Introduction.
87. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1777, Vaisakha.
88. Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association, 1869. Dr. Mouat's article on "Crime, Criminals and Prison Discipline in Bengal".
89. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1777, Jaishthya.
90. *Bharatbarshiya Upasaka Sampradaya*, Vol. II, Introduction.
91. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1772, Vaisakha, Shrabana and Agrahayana. Peary Chand Mitra's article, *Calcutta Review*, July 1846.
92. *Bharatbarshiya Upasaka Sampradaya*, Vol. II, Introduction.
93. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1776, Pausa.

94. *Vahya Vastur Op. Cit.* Vol. II, pp. 45-46.
95. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka 1776, Chaitra.
96. *Vahya Vastur Op. Cit.* Vol. II, pp. 25-27.
97. *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Saka, 1776, Pausa.

**CHAPTER IV—Political Disciples of
Raja Rammohun Roy (pp. 118-149)**

1. *Samachar Darpan* June 27, 1818.
2. *Ibid.* June 16, 1827.
3. *Ibid.* Dec. 24, 1831.
4. *Chandrika* quoted in *Samachar Darpan* June 5, 1830.
5. *Ibid.* Dec. 11, 1830.
6. *Samachar Darpan* June 26, 1828.
7. *Asiatic Journal*, 1836, p. 12, 'Education of the Natives of India'.
8. *Ibid.* 1833, Article on Rammohan Roy: "In 1829 he (Rammohan Roy) became, in conjunction with Dwarkanath Tagore and Neel Rutton Haldar, a proprietor of an English newspaper, the *Bengal Herald*".
9. *Asiatic Intelligence*, April, 1835.
10. *Calcutta Review*, January 1911, p. 28.
11. *Reformer*, quoted in the *India Gazette*, July 4, 1831.
12. *The Englishman*, Dec 5, 1837. The *Englishman* replied to the charges of the *Reformer* thus: 'Let our contemporary read what the French have done and are doing in Algiers at this day, and what the Russians are performing in Poland and choose for himself. He would find the little finger of the autocrat heavier than the whole arm of an Englishman'.
13. *Reformer*, quoted in the *India Gazette*, January 29, 1833.
14. *Reformer*, March 28, 1832, quoted in the *Asiatic Intelligence*, Oct. 1832.
15. *Reformer*, quoted in the *India Gazette*, Oct. 4, 1831.
16. *Reformer*, quoted in the *Asiatic Intelligence* Dec. 1832. Prasanna Coomar Tagore also wrote articles in January, 1833, supporting Raja Rammohan Roy's efforts to extend the Jury system in India. See *India Gazette*, January 29, 1833.
17. *Asiatic Intelligence*, May, 1838.
18. Kishorichandra Mitra—Memoirs of Dwarkanath Tagore; Bholanath Chandra in his *Life of Digambar Mitra*, Vol. II, p. 178 says "*Rammohan Roy's* example was the spurt that set his latent sentiments on fire—that developed him into a warm-hearted public man".

19. *Bengal Harukaru*, August 4, 1835, reports that Babus Dwarkanath Tagore and Radhakanta Deb and Mr. James Kyd were appointed Honorary Magistrates "in persuance of the determination of Government to give practical effect to the intention of the Legislature as to the admission of natives and East Indian gentlemen to such offices".
20. *The Bengal Spectator*, Dec. 1, 1842.
21. *The Bengal Harukaru*, Feb. 7, 1843.
22. Quoted in Bholanath Chandra's *Life of Digambar Mitra*, I, footnote on page 91.
23. Quoted in Kishorichand Mitra's *Memoirs of Dwarkanath Tagore*.
24. *The Friend of India*, March 16, 1843.

NOTE : UP TO PAGE 127 OF THE BOOK THE REFERENCES RUN UP TO 24; BUT ON ACCOUNT OF OVERSIGHT, FROM PAGE 127 (last para) THE NUMBER AGAIN RUNS FROM 17.

17. *Asiatic Intelligence*, June, 1830.
18. *Memoirs of Dwarkanath*, p. 51.
19. Quoted in Bholanath Chandra's *Life of Digambar Mitra* I.
20. *Memoirs of Dwarkanath*, p. 47.
21. Report of the Committee formed by Lord Auckland in 1838 to investigate the state of the Bengal Police, dated Aug. 18, 1838, p. 11.
22. *Ibid.* pp. 8-9; Dampier suggested that a new class of officers recruited only from the Indians, and especially from young men who had been educated at the Hindu College or the Government Schools, should be created.
23. *Ibid.* p. 9.
24. *The Friend of India*, March 16, 1843 article on the Old Hindoo Vs. The Friend of India.
25. Maharshi Debendranath Tagore's *Autobiography* (Satish Chandra Chakravarty's ed.) p. 359.
26. *The Bengal Spectator*, April 25, 1843.
27. The Proceedings of the Bethune Society, 1859-60. Intro.
28. First annual report of the British Indian Association, para 3.
29. Petition regarding Laws enacted to prevent infractions of the monopoly of Salt, 1853, signed by Debendranath Tagore as Secretary.
30. *The Bengal Harukaru*, April 24, 1843.
31. Quoted by Bholanath Chandra, *Life of Digambar Mitra* I. p. 1.

32. *Public Speeches of Ramgopal Ghose* (1871), p. 8.
33. *Ibid.* p. 9.
34. *Ibid.* p. 48.
35. *The Bengal Harukaru*, April 24, 1843.
36. *Calcutta Review*, July-Dec. 1846, p. 316.
37. *Ibid.* pp. 306-307.
38. Peary Chand Mitra's 'Notes on the Evidence on Indian Affairs', Conclusion.
39. *Calcutta Review*, *Op. Cit* p. 339.
40. *Ibid.* p. 342; Compare this view with those of Akshoy Kumar Datta and Bankimchandra Chatterjee, both of whom seem to have been indebted to Pearychand.
41. *Ibid.* pp. 340 and 347.
42. *Ibid.* p. 349.
43. Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association, 1869, p. 49.
44. *Calcutta Review*, II Oct.-Dec. 1844, p.270.
45. Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association, 1867.
46. *The Hindu Patriot*, April 23, 1857, p. 133.
47. Proceedings of the Bethune Society, 1864.
48. *Calcutta Review*, VI, p. 163.
49. *Ibid.* p. 135.
50. *Ibid.* p. 149.
51. *Ibid.* p. 176.
52. Selections from the Writings of Girish Chandra Ghose (1912), p. 117.
53. *Ibid.* p. 377.
54. *Ibid.* p. 113.
55. *Ibid.* pp. 115-119.
56. *Ibid.* p. 450.
57. *Ibid.* p. 369.
58. *The Hindu Patriot*, January 14, 1858.
59. *Ibid.* Feb. 12, 1857.
60. *Ibid.* 'The Civil Service and the Natives'.
61. *Ibid.* January 28, 1857.
62. *Ibid.* January 14, 1858.
63. *Ibid.* January 29, 1857—'On the Penal Code'. He opposed codification again in an article on 'Judicial Legislation', March 5, 1857.
64. *Ibid.* May 6, 1858.
65. *Ibid.* April 22, 1858.
66. *Ibid.* April 1, 1858.

CHAPTER V— *The Liberal School of Political Thought*
(pp. 150-178)

1. Sir Charles Trevelyan, 'On the Education of the People of India'.
2. Report of the Indian Education Commission 1882, p. 269.
3. Sir Richard Temple—*India in 1880*.
4. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Feb. 2, 1882; and Sachish Chandra Chatterjee—*Life of Bankimchandra* (3rd ed.)
5. Farquhar represents the movements inaugurated by Swami Dayananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa as Counter-Reformation. This is not true.
6. Calcutta University Calendar, 1859-60.
7. He wrote the history of Greece and Rome in Bengali.
8. Shibnath Shastri in *Modern Review*, Sept. 1910. It should be noted here that in this period Harinath Majumdar, popularly known as Kangal Harinath of Kumarkhali (Kushtea) started the *Grama-Varta-Prakasika* in April, 1863. Raja Krishnanath Roy of Kassimbazar published in 1840 'Murshidabad Patrika', the first newspaper of the Mofussil.
9. *Shomeprakash*.
10. *Kalpadruma* I pp. 545 ff. His views on the relation between the character of the people and the form of government is an echo from Mill's *Representative Government*.
11. *Shomeprakash*, Bhadra 30, 1270 B. S. (1863 A.D.)—article entitled 'How far should we depend on Government'.
12. *Ibid.* Jaishthya, 12, 1270 B.S.
13. *Ibid.* Bhadra 17, 1269 B.S.
14. *Ibid.* Phalgun 19, 1269 B.S.
15. *Ibid.* Shravana 19, 1270 B.S.
16. *Ibid.* Pausa 8, 1269 B.S.
17. *Ibid.* Asad 31, 1269 B.S.
18. *Ibid.* Chaitra 9, 1270 B.S.
19. *Ibid.* Asad 31, 1269 B.S.
20. *Ibid.* Magha 28, 1269 B.S.
21. *Ibid.* Pausa 14, 1270 and Asad 22, 1287 B.S.
22. *Ibid.* Agrahayana 22, 1270 B.S.
23. *Ibid.* Jaishthya 12, 1270 B.S.
24. *Ibid.* Asad 3, 1269 B.S.
25. *Ibid.* Chaitra 16, 1270 B.S.
26. *Ibid.* Asvin 12, 1287 B.S.
27. *Ibid.* Jaishthya 12, 1287 B.S.

28. *Ibid.* Jaisthya 28, 1269 B.S.
29. *Ibid.* Shravana 27, 1269 B.S.
30. Proceedings of the Bethune Society, Nov. 10, 1859 to April 20, 1869, p.100.
31. Transactions of the Bengal Social Science Association, 1864.
32. Proceedings of the Bethune Society, 1859-1886, p. 112.
33. *Ibid.* p. 116.
34. *Ibid.* p. 119.
35. *Mookerjee's Magazine*, August, 1873, p. 384.
36. *Ibid.* Sept. 1872, p. 76.
37. *Ibid.* p. 88.
38. *Ibid.* p. 81.
39. *Ibid.* pp. 82-83.
40. *Ibid.* p. 77.
41. Ramgopal Sanyal—*Bengal Celebrities* (1899) and Shivanath Shastri—*Life of Ramtanu Lahiri*, p. 346.
42. *Ibid.* p. 25.
43. *Speeches by Lalmohan Ghosh*, edited by Ashutosh Banerjee, Cal. 1883.
44. Archbold—*Outlines of Indian Constitutional History*, p. 157.
45. *Arya-Darshana*, Phalgun 1285, B.S. article entitled '*Atita O Vartamana Bharata*'.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.* Shravana 1284 B.S. on *Pranaya*.
48. *Ibid.* '*Atita O Vartamana Bharata*'.
49. Surendra Banerjee in his autobiography claims that it was he who directed Jogendranath to write a biography of Mazzini.
50. *Arya-darshana*, Kartik 1281 B.S. p. 309.
51. *Ibid.* Joishthya, 1281, p. 96.
52. *Ibid.* p. 97. He quotes Vrddha Manu who states that wife, sons and slaves are items of wealth and whosoever possesses these becomes their absolute master. But Vidyabhusan argues that the members of the family hold property jointly.
53. *Ibid.* Kartik, 1281, B.S. *Palli-Samaja*.
54. *Ibid.* Jaishthya, 1287 B.S.
55. *Ibid.* Phalguna, 1285.
56. *Ibid.* Vaisakha 1282, *Bharater Ekata*.
57. *Ibid.* Phalguna, 1285, *Atita O Vartamana Bharata*.
58. *Mookerjee's Magazine*, 1873, p. 11.

59. Ibid. p. 110.
60. Ibid. p. 235.
61. Ibid. p. 91.
62. Ibid. p. 109 and 1874, p. 378.
63. Ibid. 1874, p. 376.
64. Ibid. 1874, p. 379.
65. Ibid. p. 378.

CHAPTER VI—Critics of Liberal Thought (pp.179-198)

1. The Presidency College Register, Part I.
2. Speeches by Rajendralal Mitra, edited by Rai Jogeshwar Mitter, (S.K. Lahiri & Co., 1892) p. 29.
3. Ibid.
4. *Calcutta Review*, 1882, pp. 227-70, article on "The Village Community of Bengal and Upper India".
5. Ramdas Sharma—*Bharat-Uddhava-Kavya* (1877). This was on the Indian Association. The poet insinuates that the chief grievance of the patriots was that the British Government had tied down Mother India by Railway lines.
6. Skrine, E. F.—*An Indian Journalist* (a biography of Sambhoo Chandra Mookherjee).
7. Sambhoo Chandra Mukhopadhyaya—*The Prince in India and to India*, (Cal. 1871) p. 7.
8. Ibid. p. 114.
9. Ibid. p. 21, "Loyalty being but gratitude and love in the political sphere—the gratitude and love or attachment of subjects to kings—the conditions do not alter by change of sphere."
10. Ibid. p. 119.
11. Saurindramohan Tagore—*Hindu Loyalty* (Cal. 1883), p. 28.
12. The National Paper, Oct. 2, 1872.
13. Ibid. May 21, 1873.
14. Ibid. Dec. 4, 1872.
15. Ibid. June 26, 1872. The view was accepted by the Government in 1875.
16. Ibid. June 5, 1872.
17. Ibid. July 31, 1872.
18. *Sadharani*, Agrahayana 30, 1280 B.S.
19. Ibid. July 26, 1874.
20. Ibid. Agrahayana 30, 1280 B. S.
21. Ibid. Vaisakha 21, 1281 B. S.

22. Ibid. Vaisakha 28, 1281 B.S. This view bears a close resemblance to Mill's theory as expressed in the first chapter of his *Representative Government*.
23. Ibid. Agrahayana 9, 1280 B.S.
24. Ibid. Dec. 5, 1875.
25. Ibid. May 31, 1874.
26. The *Sadharani* for 1280 and 1281 B.S. are available in the Bangiya Sahitya Parisat Library. The complete file has been preserved by Ajaychandra Sircar, son of Akshoychandra.
27. Bholanath Chandra—*Life of Digambar Mitra*. The Presidency College Register notes the following about Digambar Mitra : Pupil of Derozio; entered Hindu College 1828. Began life as a teacher in the Nizamat School, Murshidabad. Manager to the Kassimbazar Raj, 1838. Zamindar. Assistant Secretary to the British Indian Association. Member, Legislative Council, 1864, 1870, 1877.
28. *The Hindoo Patriot*, April 21, 1879.
29. *Life of Digambar Mitra*, I, p. 12.
30. Ibid. pp. 224-25.
31. Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council, January 20, 1872, p. 29.
32. Quoted by Bholanath Chandra in his *Life of Digambar Mitra*.
33. Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council, January 20, 1872, pp. 32 ff.
34. *Life of Digambar Mitra* II, p. 59.
35. Ibid. II, p. 11.
36. Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council, 1875, p. 62.
37. Ibid. p. 50.
38. *Bengal, Past and Present*, 1914, Sept.-Dec., p. 289. The letter is dated 20th Nov. 1867.
39. *The Hindoo Patriot*, Feb. 12, 1872.
40. Ibid.
41. *The Kristodas Pal Anniversary* 1914-21. pp. 59-60. Principal Heramba Chandra Maitra quoted it from the "The Hindoo Patriot" at the Kristodas Pal Anniversary meeting held on July 24, 1919.
42. Ibid. pp. 139-140, quoted from the *Hindoo Patriot*, 1879.

CHAPTER VII—Political Thought of Sisirkumar Ghosh (pp. 199-232)

1. *Panchapuspa*, Asvina 1337 B.S., article by Mrinal Kanti Ghosh on the origin of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

2. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, June 13, 1872, on 'Vernacular Journalism'.
3. Anathnath Bose—*Sisir Kumar Ghosh*, Appendix.
4. *Mookerjee's Magazine*, 1874, pp. 82-83. Sambhoo Chandra Mookherjee's article, "Where shall the Baboo go?" in which he wrote : "The British officers in the Punjab, Oudh, the N.W. Provinces, the Central Provinces, Rajputana and Central India would not within the last ten years, unless sorely pressed for hands, receive a Bengali's application for any situation." "In August 1869 an advertisement appeared in the *Moniteur*, the official publication of the N.W. Provinces, inviting candidates for the post of Translator and Head Clerk to a District Judge's Court, on a pay of Rs. 120 per mensem which ends thus—'Bengali Baboos and youth fresh from College need not apply'".
5. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Oct. 30, 1873, 'Famine'.
6. *Ibid.* Sept. 26, 1878.
7. Bipin Chandra Pal—*Indian Nationalism—Principles and Personalities* (Madras 1918), p. 89, where he writes : "The *Patrika* came to special prominence under the Lieutenant-Governorship of Sir George Campbell (1870-73), whose attempt to restrict higher education with the avowed object of diverting the public funds thus set free, to the diffusion of primary education, aroused a good deal of opposition from the educated classes. And in their criticism of Campbell's acts and policy, Babu Sisir Kumar Ghosh and his brothers adopted a tone of biting satire and undisguised abuse, which first shook people's nerves somewhat violently, and then gradually, put a new courage and self-consciousness into them".
8. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Dec. 24, 1880.
9. Pearychand Mitra—*Notes on the Evidence on Indian Affairs*, 1853.
10. *The Hindoo Patriot*, Feb. 12, 1857. p. 51.
11. *Ibid.* Dec. 26, 1860.
12. *Shomeprakash*, Pausa 14, 1270 B.S.
13. *Journal of the East India Association*, No. I of 1867, p. 176.
14. *The Englishman*, June 1, 1870.
15. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 1871, pp. 322-23.
16. *Ibid.* April 31, 1874, p. 90.
17. *Ibid.* Oct. 7, 1875.
18. Sidgwick—*Development of European Polity*, Preface by the Editor, pp. vi-vii.
19. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Sept. 1 and 8, 1870 and Nov. 10, 1870; article on 'Parliament in India'.

20. Ibid. Sept. 1, 1870.
21. Ibid. 1870, pp. 350-51.
22. Ibid. Sept. 1, 1870.
23. Ibid. July 6, 1876.
24. Ibid. Sept. 8, 1870.
25. Ibid. Nov. 10, 1870.
26. Ibid. Oct. 20, 1882.
27. *Shomeprakash*, Asad 31, 1269 B.S.
28. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, January 9, 1880. The Home Rule League in Ireland was founded in 1871. The Irish demand had had its repercussion in India as early as 1880.
29. Ibid. Oct. 7, 1875.
30. Ibid. Nov. 10, 1870, 'A Parliament in India., and Sept. 26, 1878, 'Voluntary Assessors to the Legislation of India'.
31. On the basis of the information supplied by Motilal Ghosh, Anath Nath Bose writes in his Biography of *Sisir Kumar Ghosh* that Sisir Kumar was called Sinni Baba, the God-sent father, by the peasants, and that he contributed a series of articles under a pseudonym in the *Hindoo Patriot* on the grievances of the cultivators of indigo.
32. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Dec. 17, 1880, article on "Babu Upendra Nath Das".
33. Ibid. June 15, 1871.
34. Ibid. Sept. 11, 1873, 'The Representative Ryot'.
35. Ibid. Nov. 4, 1875, 'The Indian League'.
36. Ibid. 1871, p. 325.
37. Ibid. 1872, p. 20. In January, 1872 the Bengal Government proposed to entrust the Police and Primary education to the Municipalities.
38. Ibid. January 11, 1872, The Bengal Municipal Bill.
39. Ibid. Magh 20, 1278 B.S., 1872 A.D.
40. Ibid. April 15, 1875, 'The Municipal Reformation'. Bankimchandra, however, in his satire, entitled "A discourse between a Monkey and a Babu", ridiculed the idea of demanding or accepting Local Self-Government without first security national autonomy.
41. Ibid. Aug. 31, 1882, 'Muffassil, Self-Government.'
42. Ibid. March 16, 1876.
43. Ibid. May 25, 1883.
44. Ibid. June 1, 1882.
45. Ibid. Oct. 26, 1876.
46. Ibid. Feb. 17, 1876.
47. Ibid. March 30, 1876.

48. Ibid. January 25, 1880.
49. Ibid. June 28, 1877, 'Codification in India'.
50. Ibid. Oct. 26, 1876, 'The New Code of Civil Procedure and the Panchayat System'.
51. Ibid. 1874, p. 99.
52. Ibid. Feb. 2, 1882, Sept. 6, 1883; Sept. 20, 1883.
53. Ibid. 1883, pp. 64 ff.
54. Ibid. 1870, p. 3.
55. Ibid. Phalgun 27, 1876.
56. Ibid. 1870, pp. 409-410.
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